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The Socio-Economic Impacts of Nature-based Tourism: The case study of Bakgatla ba-ga Kgafela in the Pilanesberg National Park

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts (Coursework and research report)

Johannesburg, May 2005

Abstract

This research explores the socio-economic impact of nature-based tourism on surrounding communities in the Pilanesberg National Park (PNP). The study pays particular attention to the Bakgatla community. The study looks at issues of employment creation, and the participation of the community in the management of the park. Of particular importance here is whether, PNP generates employment and income making opportunities for neighbouring communities, most notably, the Bakgatla. The level at which the Bakgatla are involved in decision making processes of the park is closely scrutinised

Notwithstanding the obvious limitations with regard to the kinds and number of jobs that PNP, as an attraction is able to generate in the area, the study reveals a significant contribution that the park makes in this regard. Lodges serve as the major sources of employment recruitment in the PNP. The bulk of the recruits are mainly people from surrounding communities except in cases where required skills are not available locally.

Concerning the question of participation, the study shows that more still need to be done in terms of broadening the concept to include and reflect diverse interests groups within the community. The concept of community participation also needs to be defined beyond mere 'trickling down' of benefits to the community, to imply real empowerment. The latter relates to the question of sustainability, which could effectively be realised through meaningful involvement of the community groups and individuals in the making of decisions, and policies affecting their lives.

Declaration

I declare that this research is my own unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters of Arts in Development Studies at the University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

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……..
Simon Goitsimodimo Motlhanke

…….Day of …….. 2005

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge and thank the following people without whom this thesis would not have been possible

Special thanks to my supervisor, Professor Christian Rogerson for valuable insight, support and guidance throughout

Elsa Van Huyssteen for exceptional contribution and moral support

Khayaat Fakier (SWOP Coordinator) for believing in me and always encouraging me to press on

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) for providing financial resources for this research

My family, especially my mother, for patience and understanding throughout this research

The Management of Pilanesberg National Park for welcoming me, and allowing me to conduct this research within their premises

Lastly, my friends for always being there for me, and making sure that the social aspects of my life are well taken care of (without you guys, I could have went out of steam before the completion of this report).

Many thanks to God, the source and sustainer of life for giving me strength and courage throughout my studies

Dedication

To my family, particularly my mother, Maria Kelobiloe Motlhanke

List of Abbreviations

ANC	**African National Congress**
BOP	**Bophuthatswana**
(B)CDO	**(Bakgatla) Community Development Organisation**
CAMPFIRE	**The Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources**
CBNRM	**Community Based Natural Resource Management**
CBO	**Community Based Organisations**
CEO	**Chief Executive Officer**
DEAT	**Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism**
IIED	**International Institute for Environment and Development**
KNP	**Kruger National Park**
MEC	**Member of Executive Council**
NAD	**Native Affairs Department**
NWPTB	**North West Parks and Tourism Board**
PNP	**Pilanesberg National Park**
RDP	**Reconstruction and Development Programme**
SANP	**South African National Parks**
SDI	**Spatial Development Initiatives**

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is currently the fastest growing industry in the world (World Trade Organisation, 1987). The World Tourism Organisation indicates that international tourists' arrivals grew by a solid 2.4 per cent worldwide in 1998, and by 2020, the organisation forecasts that about 1, 56 billion tourists a year, will be roaming around the world (Newcomb, 2000). This proportionate growth owes largely to the fact of globalisation and advancements in modern technology. Until the 1970s, the so-called first world countries were the ones who benefited the most from the tourism industry (Brohman, 1996). With their superior marketing technology and relatively stable socio-political environments, these countries were able to draw huge numbers of tourists from all around the world (see Garson, 2002, Spenceley, 2003).

From the 1980s onwards, however, developing countries began to enjoy some benefits from the tourism industry (Brohman, 1996). This change of fortune could be attributed generally to improving socio-political conditions in some of these countries. Many "third world" countries, including those in Africa, from the latter half of the 20th century began to experiment with the process of democratisation (Lewis, 2000). This process reduced their levels of political instability, and more importantly, changed their image in the eyes of western countries. It is important to point out though that most of tourism taking place in the developing countries, such as South Africa, is domestic and not international (see Lewis, 2000).

The growth of tourism in developing countries provides a major boost to the economies of these countries. Most of these countries experienced proportional decline in traditional economic sectors such as mining and agriculture especially in the latter half of the twentieth century (Britton, 1982). Tourism, therefore, provides the opportunity for synergies with these conventional economic activities, and in the process, help to revitalise the economies of these countries particularly the rural areas (see Grossman and Koch, 1995). This explains why tourism, particularly ecotourism, is often adopted in many parts of the developing world, as a strategy for rural development (Coetzee, *et al*, 2001).

1.1 Objectives of the study

The aim in this research is to explore the socio-economic impacts of nature-based tourism in the Pilanesberg National Park (PNP) on surrounding communities (Fig. 1.1). The research looks at the analysis of income-generating strategies and other economic opportunities that the park generates for nearby communities. In particular, the research looks at employment and business opportunities that the Pilanesberg National Park as a protected area, stimulates and maximise for these communities. The community that is the special focus of the research is the Bakgatla ba-ga-Kgafela in Saulspoort.

Another important theme in this study relates to the question of community participation. The research looks at whether, and the extent to which, the Bakgatla community is involved or participates in decision-making processes, and the general management of the PNP. The notion of community participation is often invoked and

used narrowly to mean the involvement of only a small elite group in decision-making structures, and thus, neglects the input and involvement of other interest groups within the "community". In this research, the question of participation is treated with caution, as it tends to reify or inflate the actual involvement of people in development programmes (Goldman, 2003). The key question here is whether community participation, occurs in a broad and more comprehensive sense that involves other members of the society, or whether it occurs narrowly to only capture and reflect the interests of the elites.

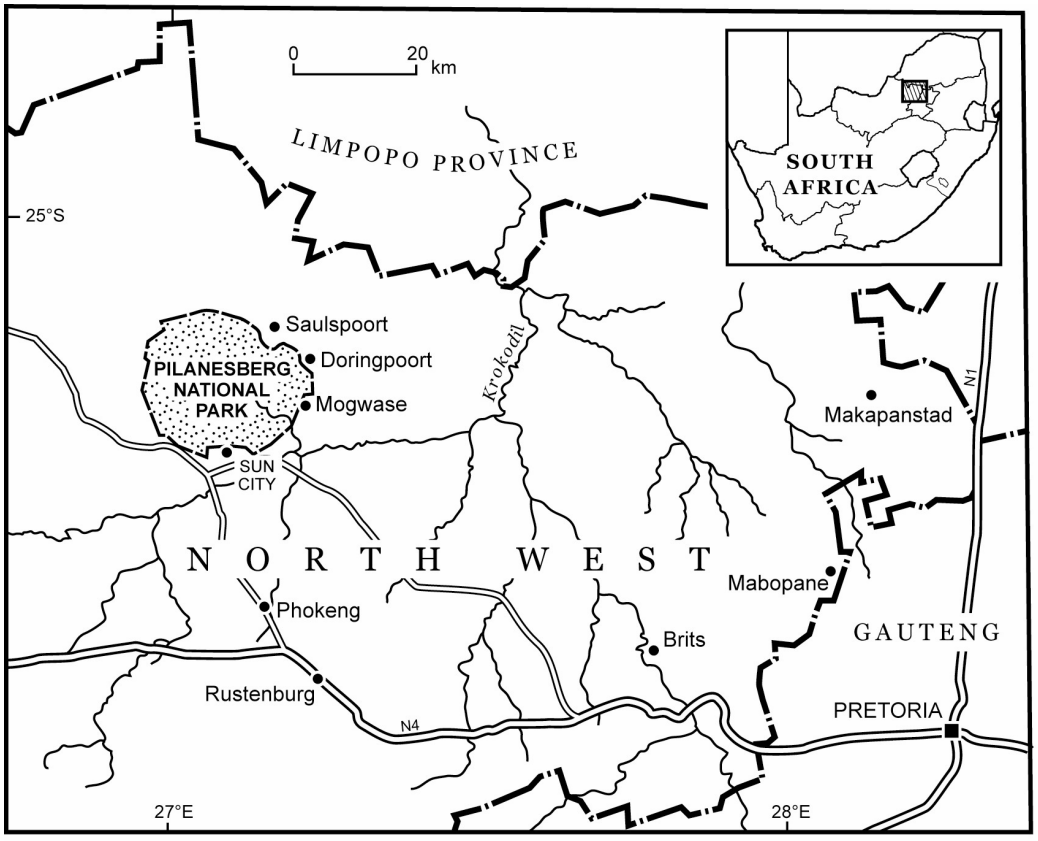


Figure 1.1 Pilanesberg National Park and surrounding areas as seen within the context of the North West Province, South Africa

The focus and emphasis on community participation is informed by an assumption that it is only when communities or intended beneficiaries of development projects are involved in the making of decisions affecting their lives, that development intervention will be meaningful, and thus, improve the lives of beneficiaries for the better (Bamberger and Cheema, 1990). It is argued that local people, more than anybody else, are better able to represent and know precisely the problems and challenges that are confronting them (Valadez and Bamberger, 1994; Shadish et al, 1991). In other words, it is not the elites with their often "-arrogant" top down approaches that are going to bring about meaningful and sustainable form of development to communities, but rather, members of communities themselves, through active involvement in the whole development process. This is notwithstanding the problems and limitations that communities (particularly those in the rural areas) often face in the participation process (see Tosun, 2000).

1.2 Rationale

The theme of national parks and surrounding communities is of particular importance in modern South Africa. This importance derives from the recognition that in the past, national parks were only concerned with conservation issues, to the neglect of the social welfare of neighbouring communities (Cock and Fig, 1999). Their concern was with what is often referred as "deep ecology" as opposed to "social ecology". Deep ecology is an ideology that contests that wildlife should be protected for its own sake and not necessarily because of the benefits it accrues to human population. The ideology sees and projects "man" as the only threat and disturbance to the otherwise "tranquil" and balanced ecosystem (Carruthers, 1995).

The notion of "deep ecology" has been the main thrust behind many environmental movements around the world in the latter half of the 20th century. Lately, however, this position has been severely criticised (Pimbert and Pretty, 1997). The main criticism is that it is untenable to put the physical environment above human interests, and to project human beings as a threat to "natural ecosystems" because for centuries humans have interacted with the environment such that what we see today and often describe as "natural" and "pristine" environment is fundamentally the result of this long process of interaction (Pimbert and Pretty, 1997).

In South Africa, during the colonial and apartheid period, care for the environment often, was used as a pretext to exclude neighbouring African communities from protected areas (Harvey, 1999; Coetzee et al, 2001). Many of these communities were in fact driven out of their lands to make way for wildlife conservation. National parks operated as exclusive preserves of white South Africans. Africans were not given the same access, and in fact, were seen as a threat to wildlife (Harvey, 1999). During this period, national parks' policy was that of control and domination over African people, and reflected an entrenched white political power in the whole South Africa (Cock and Fig, 1999)

With the advent of democracy in 1994, the policy of exclusion with regard to protected areas was reversed. National Parks were now required to start paying serious attention to communities alongside their borders (Harvey, 1999; Cock and Fig, 1999; Chadwick, 1999). Notions such as "social ecology" and "conservation with a human face" (Bell, 1987) came to the fore, all pointing out to the fact that national parks should no longer concern themselves narrowly with issues of conservation, but

instead, begin to operate as agents of development and change in rural areas (Coetzee, *et al*, 2001).

It is against this backdrop that research on the relationship of national parks and surrounding communities becomes very crucial. The question that often arises is to what extent can national parks function as structures of development in rural areas? This question is significant because in South Africa, rural areas are amongst the most economically depressed parts of the country (Koch and Grossman, 1995; Coetzee, et al, 2001). There are several studies that have already explored this question in South Africa. Most of these studies highlight some positive outcomes of community involvement in the management of national parks, but also point out to some of the difficulties and potential challenges that often underlie the process of participation (Steenkamp, 1999; de Villers, 1999; Cock and Fig, 1999; Chadwick, 1999).

The perennial problem seems to be that of the level of community participation in the management and decision-making activities of national park structures. Although this problem could, and is often attributed to the lack of commitment on the part of national parks to enhance community participation, certain limitations among community members themselves (such as high levels of illiteracy and shortage of technical skills) also play a central role in determining the level of community participation (see Tosun, 2001)

In this sense the research does not see itself as a pioneer in the field, but rather, as a contribution to an existing body of research. Nevertheless, the research is one of the few that have attempted a comprehensive analysis of the study area, that is,

Pilanesberg National Park and the neighbouring Bakgatla community. Other works include those of Mbenga (1996), and Magome and Collison (1998). Mbenga's concerns are historical, that is, the history of the Bakgatla people in the Pilanesebrg area, and the relationship the group has with other Bakgatla group in neighbouring Botswana. Magome and Collinson's work attempts to provide an analysis of the relationship between the (Bakgatla) community and PNP. However, it tends to overlook the economic aspect of this relationship, and thus, does not explicate on the opportunities that the park generates for the community. This gap is precisely what this particular research seeks to close.

1.3 Research Methodology

This research followed qualitative methods of data collection. The research is a result of a wide range of semi-structured in-depth interviews held with key personnel and stakeholders in the Pilanesberg area. A total number of 11 interviews were conducted with key individuals within the management of the Pilanesberg National Park, and also, leaders from the Bakgatla community. In addition, focus group discussions were held with groups of (Bakgatla) women at the Welgeval village. Welgeval is one of the villages in the area, where a section of the Bakgatla community, which was removed from Pilanesberg in 1980, resides. Most of the women who participated in focus group discussions had direct experience of the relocation process, and by the time of this research still felt very strong about the whole process.

Furthermore, the research also used documentary analysis. Sources such as annual reports and minutes of previous meetings, and any "grey" literature on the area proved

useful in this regard. Some of the documentary material was not exclusively focused on the Bakgatla community, but the entire Pilanesberg region at large. Nonetheless, the literature provided some useful information particularly with regard to issues and challenges of development in the area. The literature proved useful in providing additional information to verify and further contextualise data that was acquired through interviews, and informal conversations held with some members of the community in the local area.

Qualitative methods were of major use for this particular research. Such methods are considered the best and most appropriate particularly when coming to studies involving large and abstract entities such as communities (see Neuman, 2000). In particular, the methods provide a "thick description" of areas and people studied, and unlike conventional quantitative methods such as survey questionnaires, are able to capture the history and different meanings that community members themselves attach to their own day-to-day experiences (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

Qualitative research methods provide people who are being studied with an opportunity and space to describe and explain things in their own terms and not always in the terms of the researcher (Chambers, 1994). In this way, unlike quantitative approaches, qualitative methods are not extractive. Quantitative approaches privileges the researcher and often, he or she alone sets the research agenda and determines what is important and worth investigating within the community (Chambers, 1994).

Qualitative approaches become the most appropriate option for studies relating to communities and meanings and development of events in their own social contexts (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The methods are sensitive to local contexts and acknowledge that local communities possess valuable knowledge, which could be useful in the process of development (Neuman, 1997; Chambers, 1994). Qualitative methods acknowledge that knowledge is not necessarily one dimensional, always proceeding from the top-downwards, but could also be from bottom up. On local issues, communities are usually more familiar with issues directly affecting them, compared to the researcher who in most cases happen to be an outsider (Goldman, 2003). It follows therefore, that local people need to be granted the opportunity to state their side of the story and not just be treated as passive objects of policy (Chambers, 1994).

Several studies show that, in fact, ordinary people tend to be quite happy to help and cooperate with research approaches that encourage local participation (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Chambers, 1994). More especially, they feel honoured and respected that they too possess knowledge and information that can be of value to others (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000; Neuman, 2000). This situation does not just enhance their self-esteem but could also spark their passion and interest on issues and events taking place within their own areas, and by so doing, make them better and more responsible citizens (see Denzin and Licoln, 2000).

With respect to this particular study, the researcher found out that women of Welgeval were very excited with being part of the focus groups interviews and were very keen to tell "stories" of their own communities. Some of them even remarked after the

interviews that they felt relieved that they could at least have someone to express their concerns to. Although they understood that there was nothing immediate much that the researcher could do about their concerns, they did express hope that perhaps this kind of interaction may provide a base for positive things to come in the future. Some even suggested that the researcher should come back to the area in the future so that they could continue on discussions such as these.

It is worth pointing out here that focus groups discussion, albeit the best research methods to capture the views of ordinary and marginal members of the community in a warm and interactive environment (West, 1988), the methods can be difficult to manage sometimes. Given the emphasis they put on "free hand approach", the methods can sometimes get out of control and allow participants to go lengthy with the issues. Some of these issues may not even be relevant to the subject matter of the research itself. For inexperienced researchers this may prove difficult to deal with, as he or she has to constantly intervene and refocus the discussions without necessarily curbing the spirit of debates and interaction.

In one of the groups in this particular study, debates became very heated and more exciting when coming to the issues of local government structures. Participants were keen to dwell on the subject and talk about their councillors in particular, and how the latter had failed to carry out their mandates of service delivery. Although the issue was not completely besides the concerns of this research, the researcher had to strategically "intervene" and link this back to the case of Pilanesberg National Park.

Overall, the focus groups discussions went quite well despite the fact that it was the researcher's first experience with the techniques. The only impediment was that not all people who were recruited for the sessions managed to show up. Only 17, out of a possible of 24 respondents managed to show up for the interviews. The respondents were subsequently, divided into three groups. Two of the groups comprised of six participants each, and one with five. The reason for making the groups small was so that they could be more manageable, and also, to enhance the level of engagement and interaction among participants.

The groups were organized with the help of an assistant, from the community who given her knowledge of people in the area, was able to recruit participants within a short space of time. The assistant managed to organise the groups within a period of a week, and was also generous enough to offer her house as a venue for the interviews. The assistant was briefed about the objectives of the research from the onset, and therefore, able to explain these to the recruits well in advance. The recruits too understood what was going on as later shown by their involvement and level of interaction in the discussions. The criterion used for recruiting focus group participants was to look for women who showed interest and familiarity with the concerns of the research. Most of these women came from a recently formed woman's league organisation within the area.

In terms of the direct interviews, the researcher experienced few problems overall. The only problem was that on certain occasions the identified interviewees failed to turn up for the appointments. On the whole, however, interviewees were cooperative

and at times some even volunteered to “shuttle” the researcher with their own vehicles around the area.

One of the main limitations of qualitative research methods, which could also serve as an advantage, is the level of trust that the researcher is likely to cultivate with his or her informants (Neuman, 2000). This trust can be both positive and negative. On the positive side it can make things easy for the researcher in terms of access to the people and information that he or she needs (Neuman, 1997). On the other hand, the trust can also make the researcher to be too sympathetic to the world and experiences of the informants to the point that he or she sacrifices the “objectivity” that he/she is expected to display (Neuman, 1997; Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The challenge for him/her therefore, is to be both, part of, and apart from the proceedings that he/she is observing (Neuman, 2000).

1.4 Limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research

The qualitative nature of this research points out to some obvious limitations. The first limitation is that the findings of the research are highly subjective and reflect mainly the perceptions and attitudes of the people interviewed. Therefore, there is a possibility of both exaggerations and underplaying of the issues on the part of the informants.

Secondly, and more importantly, the research focused on a case study (PNP), and more specifically, the Bakgatla community. As a result, the findings cannot unqualifiedly be generalised to other case studies. The Bakgatla community is only

one of many communities around the Pilanesberg National Park, therefore, although the findings on the community could throw some light to what is happening in other communities in the area, they cannot be assumed to paint an exact picture of what is actually happening in these communities.

Another limitation of this research relates to the issue of availability of information. To some degree, it has been extremely difficult to gain access to some of the records particularly those relating to employment statistics in the study area. Also, reluctance of some of the prospective informants to make themselves available for interviews has some implications for the findings of the research.

The researcher was also constrained by factors such as time limit and inadequate financial resources to make follow-ups on some of the issues that were raised during the research. This had an effect on the number of people that were interviewed, and also, the villages that the researcher was able to visit.

Bearing all these in mind, the research does not claim to provide all the answers to the questions raised here, but rather, sees itself as a contribution to a greater insight and understanding of the role and the real impact of tourism, particularly ecotourism, on the socio-economic well-being of rural communities. More intense and comprehensive work can still be done in the area, focusing not only on the Bakgatla community, but other communities as well.

1.5 Ethical Considerations

Qualitative research by nature "intrudes" (in one way or another) into the "private" lives of people, therefore, it is imperative for the researcher to attend to some ethical considerations and implications of his/her work. These relates particularly to issues of confidentiality, and anonymity of the informants (Neuman, 2000). With this in mind, the researcher made it clear to the informants that their views and perceptions about the issues discussed in this research would be kept confidential except in cases where the informants insist on full disclosure. The contents of the research would definitely not be anonymous, as the findings would be shared with colleagues and relevant parties within academic circles. The identity of informants (particularly ordinary members of the community) is kept confidential precisely to avoid stigmatisation and potential clashes with the authorities. Disclosure applies only in cases where a person occupies a high office responsibility, and therefore, his or her, identity cannot be fully hidden. Even in this case the researcher made an attempt to make reference to names of people as minimal as possible. Emphasis was rather given to the titles or positions of responsibility that the particular informant occupies in the community.

Also, informants were told well in advance that they are under no obligation to participate in the research, and that they should do this at their own free will. This was fully complied to, and no one who provided information to this study did so under compulsion or threat. All informants were willing participants, and they knew that they could withdraw from the research whenever they feel like. Fortunately no one withdrew. Participants continued to the end, and even invited the researcher to come back at any time in the future should the need arise.

To avoid distortions and misrepresentation of the views of the informants, a tape recorder was used. This was in agreement with the individuals and groups concerned. The tape-recorder was used in all the interviews except in one case where an individual (in Welgeval) refused to go on record with what he was saying.

As a token of appreciation to participants in focus groups, the researcher provided some light refreshments throughout the proceedings. Although one felt this was not enough, it was nonetheless well appreciated by the participants. It showed them that their efforts and contribution were appreciated, and deemed significant.

Lastly, the researcher had to comply with local structures of power within the community, and not just venture inside to pursue the research questions. This meant that before proceeding to ordinary members of the community, the researcher had to first get permission from the Bakgatla tribal authority. On the part of the researcher this was a mere sign of respect, but to the tribal authority or at least one member whom the researcher consulted with, this was precisely for the researcher's own "personal security". The researcher was nonetheless, pleased with fact that the tribal council did acknowledge the need for confidentiality and did not interfere or closely monitor the researcher's interaction with ordinary members of the community. In this sense, mutual respect and trust between the researcher and authorities within the study area was ensured in the entire research process.

1.6 Organisation of Chapters

The organisation of this research is as follows:

Chapter One forms the introduction of the research. The Chapter introduces the objectives of the research, and covers issue such as the rationale, and the methodology used in undertaking the research

Chapter Two: This Chapter provides some background of the case studies, Pilanesberg National Park and the Bakgatla community. The Chapter provides a general background of the PNP and the Pilanesberg area at large in terms of the physical location of the park, the economy of the area, and in particular, the significance of the Pilanesberg National Park to the economy of the area. The history of the Bakgatla community, and their position within the Pilanesberg area is also discussed in the chapter.

Chapter Three: The Chapter discusses the growth of the tourism industry in South Africa since transition to democracy in 1994. The Chapter points out that tourism in post-apartheid South Africa, has been described and adopted as one of the strategies for national reconstruction and development. This is particularly with reference to rural development. Particular attention is given to ecotourism, which is seen as a viable option to revitalise the economies of rural areas in South Africa.

Chapter Four: This Chapter analyses the history of protected areas, particularly national parks in South Africa. The Chapter argues that during the colonial and apartheid period, South Africa followed a preservationist model of conservation,

which focused exclusively on the conservation of wildlife, and excluded broader issues of human and social development.

Chapter Five: This Chapter focuses on the shift from the preservationist model of conservation, to community-based conservation (CBC) approaches. The Chapter argues that although the CBC approaches marked a significant departure from an authoritarian preservationist approach, they also, are borne with certain difficulties. The main difficulty relates to the question of community participation.

Chapter Six: This particular Chapter focuses on the discussion and analysis of the findings of the research.

Chapter Seven: The Chapter is about the conclusion and recommendations of the research

CHAPTER 2:

BACKGROUND OF CASE STUDIES

The aim in this chapter is to provide a historical background of the study area, Pilanesberg National Park. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section covers the background of Pilanesberg National Park (PNP). The section lays down a map of the park in terms of its physical location, historical development, and more broadly, contribution to the local economy. In addition, the section examines the Sun City complex, on the Southern border, in order to show how the complex add, and contribute to the value of PNP as a tourist destination.

The second section of the chapter focuses on the Bakgatla community. Here the chapter looks at the history, and more generally, the place of the Bakgatla people within the greater Pilanesberg area. The chapter highlights the fact that the Bakgatla, more than any other community in the area, has a special kind of relationship with Pilanesberg National Park. This relationship emerges as a result of the long history of the community in the area, and more recently, from the fact that the Bakgatla as a community, suffered huge losses of land when the area was declared a national park in 1979. This explains the community's protracted struggle with the PNP management demanding the return of their land, or at least a fair share of benefits from the commercial activities of the park. It is precisely for this reason that the Bakgatla community is selected as a case study for impact analysis in this study. The importance of the Bakgatla to the Pilanesberg region, rests primarily on the community's "antiquity and continuity" in the area (Mbenga, 1996).

2.1 Pilanesberg National Park: Physical Location

Pilanesberg National Park (PNP) is located in the Northwest province of South Africa. The park is approximately 58 000 hectares in size, and it is the fourth largest national park in South Africa. Pilanesberg is situated about 150 kilometres from the city of Johannesburg, and 60 kilometres north of Rustenburg (see fig 2.1). The latter is the closest large town to the park. Prior to 1994, PNP fell under the control of the Bophuthatswana homeland government of Lucas Mangope, and was under the jurisdiction of the Bophuthatswana Parks Board (Magome and Collinson, 1998).

With the advent of democracy in 1994, and the subsequent collapse of the homeland system, Pilanesberg National Park, together with other nature reserves in the former homelands, became part of the "new" South Africa. Presently, PNP falls under the jurisdiction the North West Parks and Tourism Board (NWPTB). This is a newly appointed provincial parks body, to replace the old Bophuthatswana Parks Board. The NWPTB is responsible for the management and running of several protected areas in the North West province. These include two national parks, three game reserves and a number of heritage centres. PNP is the oldest nature reserves under board's jurisdiction (PNP Management Series, 2000).

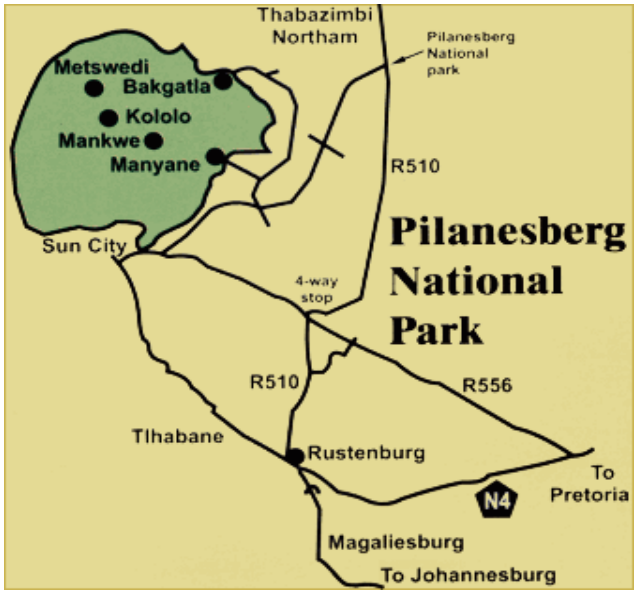


Figure 2.1 The physical location of Pilanesberg National Park

2.2 The creation of Pilanesberg National Park

Pilanesberg was officially declared a national park in 1979. This declaration followed a study conducted by the University of Potchefstroom suggesting that the area was best suited for nature conservation and ecotourism development than other land uses practices that were prevailing at the time (Harvey, 1999; Magome and Collinson, 1998; PNP Management Series, 2000). It was realised that the arid conditions of the area make it less productive in primary economic activities, namely farming and agriculture, and therefore ecotourism, would provide a better land use option. It would serve as a viable complement to agriculture and farming, and by so doing enhance the economic output of the area (see PNP Management Series, 2000). Following the findings of the University of Potchefstroom' study, surrounding communities were told that henceforth, the area would be utilised as a protected area. Fences were subsequently installed, and a massive restocking programme known as "operation

genesis" was embarked upon (PNP Management Series, 2000). Animals were re-introduced into the area, and tourism infrastructure including roads; rest camps; environmental centres and picnic sites were put in place. In 1979, the area was officially proclaimed a national park (Harvey, 1999; Magome and Collinson, 1998).

Before the creation of PNP, the Pilanesberg area was settled by a small number of white farmers (Koch and Grossman, 1995). A large part of land (about 8 500 ha) was settled by various African families, most notably the Bakgatla, who had bought most of the land from the British colonial administrators after the "Anglo-Boer" War of 1899-1902. These "families" were subsequently, removed from their land, to pave way for "nature conservation" (Koch and Grossman, 1995). As it was usually the case with the creation of protected areas in the rest of South Africa at the time, the removal of the Bakgatla people was harsh, enforced through the military, and also, not accompanied by sufficient compensation (Harvey, 1999; Magome and Collinson, 1998).

2.3 Local Economy

The economy of the Pilanesberg and Rustenburg region as a whole is diversified, with mining being a dominant economic sector in the area. The majority of locally employed people particularly males are employed in the local platinum mines. Tourism and related sectors in renowned attractions such as Sun City also absorb a significant pool of labour, thus contributing to the overall reduction of unemployment in the region. As it is the case in other rural areas in South Africa, cattle ranching and

farming constitute a major source of subsistence for many families and communities in the Pilanesberg area.

Nevertheless, unemployment is still a major problem in the area. This is not just the problem of Pilanesberg alone but North West province as a whole. Even more broadly the problem characterises most rural parts of South Africa. This is because during the apartheid period, rural areas were amongst the most neglected areas in terms of economic development (see Coetzee, *et al*, 2001). The problem of unemployment in the Pilanesberg region has been exacerbated by the closure of some of the firms in local industrial centres such as Mogwase. The firms in Mogwase used to provide employment for a significant number of people especially females who otherwise could not be absorbed into the highly labour intensive mining sector (Focus groups interview, 27 November, 2003).

Having said that, it is important to point out that data on the levels of unemployment in the Pilanesberg region remain inconclusive. This is precisely because most employment activities in the area take place within the informal sector. The latter, in countries such as South Africa, has historically been neglected. The situation is even worse in rural areas where communities, in the main, are poorly organised, and as a result, have poor records of keeping documents concerning issues such s unemployment levels.

However, it emerged during this research that unemployment is one of the major problems in the Pilanesberg area, with women being the most severely affected. The reasons for this are not stated, but could justifiably be linked to the subservient

position that women generally assume in many societies, particularly traditional rural societies (Heward and Bunwaree, 1998; Heyneman, 2001; Cockrane, 1988). Moreover, the physical requirement of most jobs in mines means that the majority of the recruits are men.

2.4 Impact of the Sun City complex

Without doubt, wildlife, notably the "Big Five" constitutes a major draw-card of tourists to Pilanesberg National Park. However, the success of the park cannot be fully understood without taking into consideration the role and influence of the Sun City casino complex on the southern border. The Sun City complex makes a significant contribution to PNP with regard to the overall flow of tourism into the park. The complex serves as a tourist magnet for the entire Pilanesberg area (Magome and Collinson, 1998; Koch and Grossman, 1995). Through activities such as gambling and annual golf tournaments, Sun City provides the "glitz and glamour" for many tourists and visitors alike, who then normally proceed to the PNP to augment their overall experiences with the experience of "the wild" (Koch and Grossman, 1995). Conversely, nature tourists to the PNP also tend to pass via Sun City on their way back, in order to complement their experiences of nature with "glitz and glamour". In this way, the two attractions are synergetic and add value to each other, and together, provide tourists with a much richer experience (Koch and Grossman, 1995).

Sun City management also played a major role in the introduction of lions into the PNP. Sun International Company contributed an amount of R10 million to oversee this process. The introduction of lions into the park was more inspired by commercial

considerations than ecological concerns. It was believed that the inclusion of lions would enhance the market value of PNP, and by implication the complex itself. The presence of lions would enable the park to market itself as a "Big Five" destination (Johnson Maoka, 07 July 2002). The strategy seemed to have borne some fruits because Pilanesberg has developed into one of the major tourist attractions in the North West province. It is estimated that the park's annual contribution to the local economy approximates R25 million (Davies, 1994 cited in Magome and Collinson, 1998).

2.5 Geological Features

The significance of Pilanesberg National Park does not just lie on its wildlife experience, but also, in its geological and scientific value. As a protected area, the park harbours some important and world-renowned geological features. The land in which the park is situated is a result of a large extinct volcano that erupted some 1200 years ago. What remains of this eruption is an almost perfect set of circular alkaline mountains that are concentric ring formations (Magome and Collinson, 1998). Geologists argue that this is a rare phenomenon, and that Pilanesberg is the second largest and most alkaline ring in the world (Lurrie, 1973 cited in Magome and Collinson, 1998)

These unique geological features, plus the advantage of being located next to one of Southern Africa's most successful casino complex, Sun City, make Pilanesberg one of the most attractive tourist destinations in South Africa. In the words of Collinson, the former director and warden of the park, Pilanesberg is made even more complete by

the fact that it is driven by "genuine desire to uplift the underdeveloped local communities [sic]" (Quoted in Magome and Collinson, 1998). It is the first national park in South Africa to seriously attempt to integrate issues of conservation and development (Harvey, 1999). This point will be carried further in Chapter Six.

2.6 The Bakgatla ba-ga Kgafela in the Pilanesbergy area: A brief history

The Bakgatla[1] (Bakgatla ba-ga-Kgafela) inhabited the area around the Pilanesberg Mountains for a long time. This was even before the arrival of the Boer settlers in the 1830s. Although there are no adequate documented records on the Bakgatla, and the time they actually arrived in the area, archaeological findings point out to widespread Tswana settlement, dating as far back as the period of the Iron Age (Mbenga, 1996).

Like many other Tswana groups in the area, the Bakgatla people trace their origin to a mythical figure called Malope, son of Masilo. Malope and Masilo are said to have lived sometimes between 1440 and 1560. According to Legassick (1969), the two figures are believed to have been leaders of "lineage clusters" which later constituted the Bakgatla group. Various historians on the origins of the Batswana people, however, agree that reference to Malope and Masilo is pure mythical, and devoid of any factual truth (Mbenga, 1996). Nonetheless, it is pointed out that this reference might just have been a desperate attempt on the part of later Bakgatla generations to

[1] The Bakgatla people are divided into three main groups, that is Bakgatla ba-ga- Mannana in Moshupa (Botswana); Bakgatla ba-ga- Mosetlha in Mmakau (Pretoria district) and Bakgatla ba-ga-Kgafela in Mochudi (Botswana) and Saulspoort in the Pilanesberg district. For more see Mbenga (1996): The *Bakgatla baga-Kgafela In The Pilanesberg District of The Western Transvaal From 1899 to 1931.* This particular research focuses exclusively on the latter group, that is, Bakgatla ba-ga- Kgafela.

try to explain the divisions and fragmentations that characterised and often threatened the stability of the tribe in the eighteenth through to the twentieth centuries (Mbenga, 1996).

The process of fragmentation and dispersal was not uniquely confined to the Bakgatla people, but included other Tswana groups in the region as well. Mbenga (1996) points out that these divisions and conflicts most probably emerged out of increased pressure on the environment emerging from factors such as population growth. Population growth put pressure on available resources, and people started competing for scarce resources. It is apparent that various sections of the tribe and other groups in the area subsequently began to invoke upon their lineage and ethnic identities in an attempt to control and mobilise resources. This process created, and exacerbated existing political differences among groups. Succession disputes within chiefdoms were also a major factor in this part of the Transvaal (Cornell, 1988).

Conflicts over resources and succession continued throughout the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. Throughout this process, the Bakgatla were able to emerge and establish themselves as a formidable Tswana group in the area. They conquered weaker neighbouring groups, and incorporated many people into their own chiefdom. These were often "wandering" people seeking refuge following the collapse or invasion of their chiefdoms (see Mbenga, 1996). This process of conquest increased the number of the Bakgatla people and thus, further consolidated the position of the Bakgatla in the area (Mbenga, 1996). Mbenga (1996) points out that some of the new additions into the Bakgatla tribe were not necessarily refugees but rather, people conquered and forcefully taken away from their own polities. He further points out

that at the time the Bakgatla had already demonstrated ambitions of state building and thus, a force to reckon with in the area.

Throughout the late eighteenth century to the early nineteenth century, the Bakgatla dominated the Pilanesberg region, and for a while went without any serious challenge from other Tswana groups in the region. Their strongest challenge came from the Bafokeng people who on several occasions managed to defeat or at least seriously shake the Bakgatla chiefdom. Battles with Bafokeng were so debilitating such that when Mzilikazi and his Ndebele people invaded the area in the late 1820s, the Bakgatla could not wage a formidable resistance to the intruders (Mbenga, 1996). They were subsequently defeated, and for some time were forced to pay tribute to the invaders. Relations with the Ndebeles remained "cordial" as long as the Bakgatla paid their tribute (Mbenga, 1996). Shortly after the Ndebele invasion, the Bakgatla experienced yet another invasion from the Voortrekkers as the latter ventured into the interior in the late 1830s. The Voortrekkers chased the Ndebeles further north across the Limpopo (Breutz, 1953; Mbenga, 1996).

From the late 1830s onwards the Bakgatla history in the Pilanesberg region was shaped predominantly by their interaction with the Voortrekkers, and later, the British colonial administration. The Bakgatla relationship with the Voortrekkers was a very complex one characterised by both cooperation and conflict. The two groups cooperated in the chasing away of Mzilikazi across the Limpopo, but later on, the perpetual demand of Bakgatla labour by the Voortrekkers resulted in relations between the two groups soaring to the lowest level. This culminated in the public flogging of the Bakgatla chief, Kgamanyane by the Voortrekker's commandant, Paul

Kruger (Breutz, 1953). The humiliation of Kgamanyane in front of his own people resulted in him fleeing together with about half of his people to Mochudi in Bechuanaland (presently Botswana), and established another Bakgatla chieftaincy (Schapera, 1973). Subsequently, the Bakgatla ended up having two chieftaincies, one in Saulspoort, and the other one in Mochudi. The Mochudi chieftaincy remained paramount, with the Bakgatla in Saulspoort always having to consult with it before making any major decisions on issues such as the buying and selling of land (Mbenga, 1996).

The significance of the two separate Bakgatla chiefdoms for this particular study is that it provides a useful context for the notion, or rather, strong sense of community that the Bakgatla people espouse today. The brutal and humiliating experience that their chief, Kgamanyane, went through in the hands of Paul Kruger, and the subsequent split of the community, had created bitter memories, and a strong sense of unity and solidarity among the Bakgatla people. By the time of this research, it was apparent that some members of the community especially old men at the tribal council still view the group in Muchudi as an integral part of the Bakgatla community. They often speak of the two chiefdoms as one and inseparable, and thus, treat any reference or emphasis on their separateness with suspicion and as a mere attempt to divide the tribe. To them, there is only one Bakgatla tribe. The geographical boundaries that exist at the present stage are just artificial, and a result of a particular historical experience. The dynamics and contradictions of this trans- boundary identity are well beyond the scope of this study, and they are discussed in some details in Mbenga (1996).

It is important nonetheless to point out that the notion of "Bakgatla community" as used in this research is not used in a comprehensive sense to include the section at Muchudi but, rather, the focus here is particularly on the Bakgatla of Saulspoort. This explains and captures an understanding of the notion of "community" that is advocated here, that is, notwithstanding the importance of sharing common historical experiences, language and certain set of values, the centrality of physical location, that is, sharing an easily identifiable geographic setting (see Leballo, 2000). The concept of "community" and community participation in particular, is discussed in some details in Chapter Five.

Overall, this chapter was about the background of the case studies, the Pilanesberg National Park at large, and the Bakgatla community in particular. The chapter laid down a map of the PNP in the broader Pilanesberg region in terms of its location, surroundings and, and the dominant economic activities in the area. Moreover, the Chapter provided some background of the community in point here, that is, the Bakgatla baga-Kgafela. The Chapter showed that the Bakgatla people have long inhabited the area around the Pilanesberg Mountains. This was long before the Ndebeles, and later the Voortrekkers invaded the area. The name Pilanesberg was in fact given after one of the Bakgatla chief, Pilane, by the Voortrekkers when they arrived into the area towards the mid-nineteenth century. On the whole, the Chapter provides a useful foundation for subsequent chapters, particularly Chapter Six which focuses specifically on the findings of this research.

CHAPTER 3:

TOURISM GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

This chapter sets out to discuss the growth and development of tourism in post-apartheid South Africa. The Chapter starts out by laying down a broad picture of the state of tourism in the country, and highlights that in post 1994 South Africa, tourism has been identified as a potential strategy for national reconstruction and development. The Chapter then goes on to focus more specifically on ecotourism as a strategy for rural development. By way of passing, a distinction is also made between nature based tourism and ecotourism. Lastly, the Chapter looks at some of the challenges facing the development of tourism in post 1994 South Africa.

3.1 The growth of the tourism sector since 1994

South Africa experienced remarkable levels of growth in the tourism industry since the advent of democracy in 1994. It is estimated that between 1994 and 1998 the number of international tourists flocking to South Africa increased from 700 000 to 1, 4 million (cited in Rogerson, 2002; Cluster Consortium, 1999). Although these figures declined in subsequent years, especially in the years 1999 and 2000, the country still enjoys significant levels of tourism growth relative to other countries in Africa (see Lewis, 2001).

It is estimated in South Africa that during 1998, the tourism sector contributed 8,2 percent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Although this contribution still lagged

far behind that of the manufacturing and mining sectors, it pointed out to a significant growth and increasing role of tourism to South Africa's economy (DEAT, 2000). Some analyses have even ventured to predict that the tourism industry will soon overtake the mining sector in terms of contribution to the country's economy. With regard to job creation, tourism is cited as one of the main job creator in South Africa, employing about 740 000 people (both directly and indirectly through spin-offs). This estimates to one in every 16 South Africans being employed within the industry (DEAT, 2000).

The growth of the tourism industry in South Africa owes most to the remarkable attractions that the country possesses (Lewis, 2001). These include beautiful landscapes and townscapes, and also, the temperate climate more or less similar to that experienced in some parts of Europe (Grossman and Koch, 1995). More importantly, this growth can be explained in terms of the world-class infrastructure (Lewis, 2001) that the South Africa has, and is undoubtedly, secondary to none on the African continent.

Most of the international tourists flocking into South Africa come from the African continent, and contrary to popular opinion, do not come from Western Europe and North America (Page, 1999; MAP, 2001). This explains why the promotion and development of regional tourism is so important to the South African tourism economy (Ghimire, 2001). Domestic tourism constitutes the heart of South Africa's tourism industry. It is estimated that up to 87 percent of tourism in the country is domestic (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2001), with just about 13 percent being from outside.

3.2 Tourism as a strategy for reconstruction and development

South Africa is one of the few countries in the world, which explicitly tie tourism growth with broader issues of national reconstruction and development (Rogerson, 2002). This emphasis owes much to the country's harsh history of apartheid, which saw the South African society being divided and developed along racial lines. The effect of this was that the white minority section of the society became the main beneficiary of the state's resources and development initiatives, while the African majority were excluded, or at least being treated as an afterthought (South Africa, 1996; Coetzee, et al, 2001).

The new democratic government when coming into power in 1994, sought to reverse these structural inequalities. It amongst others identified tourism as a potential strategy to address the problems of inequality and underdevelopment in the country. Subsequently, various policy frameworks were put in place to offer strategies and possible solutions that would ensure that tourism attain its envisaged objectives. The foundation of these frameworks is the *White Paper on the Promotion and Development of Tourism* (1996). The Paper lays down a map for tourism development and potential in South Africa.

Although the Paper describes tourism as having been a missed opportunity in the country in the sense that it had been protected from foreign competition, and also, it had largely been used to cater for a small section of domestic population, the Paper still views tourism as a potential driver for the South African economy (see also Rogerson, 2002; Mahaye, 1996; Mwandla, 1995; Donaldson, 1995). The Paper states that tourism provides a viable tool to help to bring previously marginalized

communities and individuals into the country's mainstream economy. This is so, because tourism as an economic activity has far-reaching effects. It can spawn entrepreneurship and create new job opportunities, create new services, drive other sectors of the economy, and generate the much-needed foreign currency (Magi and Nzama, 2002).

3.3 Tourism and rural development

Tourism in South Africa is being promoted as a strategy for rural development. It is argued that tourism, since it relies heavily on resources easily accessible to the poor such as land and heritage sites (Goodwin, 2000), is more suitable for development in remote and economically depressed rural areas which in the past, were being neglected by the erstwhile apartheid regime (Coetzee, et al, 2001). Tourism can help to diversify and regenerate economic activities in these areas, and where appropriate, can form useful synergies with traditional economic activities such as farming and agriculture (see Cater, 1994).

The relevance of tourism as a potential strategy for rural development rests in the fact that rural areas are often seen as carriers of culture. As a result, they constitute some of the major attractions for cultural tourists. The countryside is viewed by many people including tourists as the locus of "pristine" traditions, "untouched" and "unaffected" by forces of modernity (Collins, 1997). Thus, for many tourists seeking an occasional retreat from the often highly routinised urban life, the countryside provides a viable alternative. This augurs well for economies of these places because it gives them the necessary exposure to the outside world, and more importantly,

tourists would normally spend their money on local goods and accommodation facilities (adapted from Tosun, 2002).

However, there is an increasing realisation that tourism development is not always a panacea for rural development, and in fact, can leave rural people and environments worse off than they were before tourism initiatives took place (Fennel, 2002; Brohman, 1996; Coetzie, *et al*, 2001). For this reason, a more socially responsible form of tourism is being promoted, that is, ecotourism. Ecotourism means different things to different people (Fennel, 2002). The concept had been widely used, and for this particular reason, had often been subject to abuse and misuse (Fennel, 2002). Often, tourism operators had described their projects as promoting ecotourism, merely as a bait to endear themselves to local populations and governments, whereas in actual fact, they are only interested in making money (Fennel, 2002). This adds further to the already existing confusion about the concept.

The concept of ecotourism in South Africa is captured and espoused through concepts and expressions such as "responsible tourism"; "community based tourism"; "sustainable tourism", and many others (Magi and Nzama, 2002). Basically all these concepts point out and emphasise the need to develop tourism in a manner that is sensible to local cultures and environments, and make sure that local people benefit as much as possible from tourism development - both economically and culturally (Magi and Nzama, 2002). The idea therefore, is to weave tourism development with broad cultural and social web of the community (Magi and Nzama, 2002). This means that local people should be brought into the array of tourism projects not just as benefactors in terms of employment and other economic opportunities, but also as co-

managers of tourism resources. They should be able to influence the direction and pace at which tourism development takes place in their own areas (Cater, 1994; Fennel, 2002).

Ecotourism therefore, is more about educating tourists about local people and their physical environments (Fennel, 2002). It educates tourists on how to interact with the environment and people in a sustainable and mutually enriching way. For tourists, ecotourism provides an opportunity to learn more about local people and their environments. For local people on the other hand, ecotourism provides them with opportunities for empowerment (Cater, 1994; Brohman, 1996). It gives local people a platform to acquire and improve on their entrepreneurial skills such that they would be able to continue with, or carry out their own tourism initiatives even long after a project had taken place.

3.3.1 Ecotourism versus Nature-based tourism

The concept "ecotourism" is often confused and used interchangeably with "nature-based tourism". Although the two concepts are closely related, and share some similarities, they also differ quite substantially (Grossman and Koch, 1995). Nature-based tourism is a much broader category encompassing all forms of tourism enterprises using or relying on the natural environment (Weaver, 2001 cited in Fennell, 2002). This includes activities such as backpacking, boat tours, cycling, hunting, and farm tours. Ecotourism forms part of this category as well. Therefore, while nature-based tourism is broad and includes all forms of tourism taking place on

the natural environment, ecotourism is a particular form of nature-based tourism (Fennel, 2002).

Ecotourism differs from nature-based tourism in the sense that it puts a particular emphasis on the need for appropriate behaviour among tourists. It requires from nature tourists that they behave and act responsibly in a manner that ensures the sustainable use of resources. This is a fundamental point of departure from mere nature-based tourism. The latter is more preoccupied with mere adventure and visits to remote areas, and does not make any stipulations whatsoever as to how tourists should interact with local environments, including local cultures and traditions (Weaver, 2001 in Fennel, 2002). The distinction between the two concepts is therefore, crucial as it would help to reduce the abuse and often, vague usage of the concept of ecotourism by some unscrupulous tourism operators (adapted from Fennel, 2002).

3.4 Some of the Challenges facing tourism Development in South Africa

Although ecotourism and tourism in general holds some great opportunities for rural development in South Africa, there are nonetheless, some noticeable constraints that can render this possibility obsolete. One of these limitations is lack of awareness and entrepreneurial skills among many ordinary people whom tourism development and promotion is aimed to assist (Leballo, 200, Cluster Consortium, 1999). Often, poor people particularly in the countryside are less equipped with skills, and have on the whole, poor access to relevant information about development projects taking place in their own areas. This makes it difficult for them to take advantage and make use of

opportunities that tourism might unravel within their areas (adapted from Tosun, 2002).

The poor access to tourism information is augmented at a broader level by some structural problems such as poor or lack of adequate tourism infrastructure in the countryside. In some instances rich tourism products are inaccessible to tourism operators due to poor road infrastructure to such places. This is largely the result of uneven apartheid policy of development, which saw the rural areas being some of the most neglected areas in South Africa in terms of state development initiatives. To reverse this, the post 1994 government initiated several Spatial Development Initiatives (SDIs) around the country. The two typical examples are the Wild Coast SDI, and the Lubombo SDI. These initiatives seek to bridge the gap between potentially rich tourism sites with major tourism markets. They aim to unlock the tourism potential of these marginal rural areas by making them more accessible to investors (Rogerson, 2001b; Rogerson, 2002).

To summarise, this chapter was basically about the growth and development of tourism in the post apartheid South Africa. The Chapter highlighted that tourism in the post 1994 South Africa had been identified and promoted as a potential strategy for national reconstruction and development. This is against the backdrop of the apartheid period, whereby the tourism sector in South Africa was hindered in many several ways such as protection from international competition, and the broader domestic pool of tourists, thus earning the description of having been a missed opportunity (South Africa, 1996; Magi and Nzama, 2002).

The Chapter went further to discuss in some details the adoption of ecotourism as a strategy for rural development. The Chapter argued that although ecotourism hold great potential for development in the rural areas, it should not be seen as a panacea for all economic challenges facing these areas. Rather, ecotourism should be adopted as a synergy to complement other economic activities in the countryside. In South Africa, these include farming, agriculture and often the mining sector.

Moreover, the Chapter made a distinction between nature-based tourism and ecotourism. The Chapter pointed out that although the two concepts are often used interchangeably, they are not necessarily synonymous. Nature-based tourism involves all forms of tourism relying on the natural environment, whereas ecotourism focus specifically on the actions and behaviours of nature tourists, and emphasise the sustainable use of natural resources (Fennel, 2002). In this way, ecotourism is a form of nature-based tourism but depart from the latter in the sense that it seeks to improve the behaviour of tourists by providing them with education about local cultures, and physical environments. The overall aim here is to ensure the sustainable use of resources, and the general empowerment of local communities (Fennel, 2002; Brohman, 1996; Cater, 1994; Swarbrooke, 1998).

CHAPTER 4:

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF NATURE CONSERVATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Ecotourism in South Africa is strongly linked to protected areas. This is because protected areas, particularly national parks, are the major drawcards for tourism in rural areas. In this way, national parks are seen as major potential agents of development in the countryside (see Grossman and Koch, 1995). In South Africa, visits to national parks constitute about 61 percent of the country's overall tourism output (Spenceley, 2003). In the past, national parks in South Africa had concerned themselves narrowly and solely with issues of wildlife conservation (Chadwick, 1999) to the exclusion of broader issues of social development. Planning for parks showed no or very little regard to the socio-economic needs of surrounding communities (Carruthers, 1995; Coetzee *et al*, 2001).

Many of the local communities were chased out of their lands during the creation, and later expansion of national park structures. Some of them were forced to settle in otherwise unproductive lands outside the borders of the reserves (Harvey, 1999). Access to natural resources such as wild animals and medicinal plants, which for ages had provided as sources of livelihood and subsistence for these indigenous communities, was severely tempered with (Carruthers, 1995). To make matters worse, these communities were not allowed to kill wild animals which often wandered outside protected areas and caused serious damage to crops and livestock (Brenchin *et al*, 2003). Such killings were criminalised and usually followed by harsh consequences. For many dispossessed African communities, therefore, national parks

came to represent structures of "white man's" supremacy over indigenous populations. They became structures of control and domination, where the "white man" had preferred the advancement of the welfare of animals over and ahead of the welfare of people (see Fig and Cock, 1999; Carruthers, 1995; Coetzee *et al*, 2001)).

This Chapter aims to discuss the history of national parks in South Africa. In particular, the Chapter looks at the colonial and apartheid practice and approach to conservation. The Chapter argues that during these periods, South Africa took what could be described as an "authoritarian" or "fortress" approach to conservation, which put primacy on the preservation of "nature", often to the detriment of the social welfare of surrounding communities. The Chapter argues that this kind of approach was informed largely by the American and British model of conservation, which essentially drew clear-cut boundaries between "nature" and human beings.

4.1 Colonial and apartheid approaches to conservation

National Parks in South Africa, like in other parts of the developing world, followed the western model of nature conservation. The model often referred as "the Yellowstone model" had its roots in the United States in the nineteenth century (following the creation of Yellowstone National Park), and it sets out clear-cut boundaries between nature conservation and development (McCabe, in Chatty and Colchester, 2002). The model stipulated that nature conservation and development issues are two separate and inherently incompatible objectives, which could not be advanced at the same time, because doing this would invariably lead to disaster (Adams and McShane, 1992). The model soon spread to Britain and across the rest of

Europe, hence, its often-loose association with the west. The Yellowstone model of conservation had also been known as the preservationist approach to wildlife given its tendency to privilege wildlife protection over human social development (Chatty and Colchester, 2002).

This approach emerged out of increasing fear and concern in the west that the growth of civilization would eventually lead to the extinction and encroachment of natural ecosystems by human populations. To avoid this possible situation, huge areas of land were set aside for the protection of flora and fauna (Chatty and Colchester, 2002). This protection of wildlife often happened at the expense of human populations, especially those situated alongside the borders of the marked areas. Many of these communities were forcefully taken out of their own lands to otherwise desolated places. The explanation for the removal was that in the long run, the preservation of wildlife would be beneficial to human beings themselves, especially the future generations (Chatty and Colchester, 1994: 3)

The preservationist approach to wildlife conservation had since been transferred to other parts of the world through the process of colonialism (McCabe in Chatty and Colchester, 2002). Through this process, Britain transferred the practice to her colonies around the world, including South Africa (Chatty and Colchester, 2002). It is in the colonies that the full effect of the preservationist approach was strongly felt. Colchester (1994) points out that at home (in Britain), the conservation practice was characterised by the recognition of existing rights of farmers, and that the creation of national parks did not necessarily imply the subjugation and forceful removal of local

rural communities from their lands. The latter was an exclusive experience of colonies (Colchester, 1994).

The reason for this marked distinction is not explicit enough, but most probably, it had something to do with Britain's difficulty of running colonies themselves. Britain, as geographically afar from her colonies, and having her own pressing problems, both domestic and international to attend to, found it increasingly difficult to enforce uniform policies across her colonies (Hargreaves, 1996; Whitson, 1970). This lack of surveillance from the top, gave British colonial administrators some leeway to do as they pleased. They could for instance, easily bend or overlook some of the policies that Britain expected them to implement without fear of being detected or held to account. They could exploit this situation as long as on the whole, they remained loyal to the British crown (Hargreaves, 1996). Colonies therefore, were often run as private properties of administrators particularly with regard to how these administrators deal with local populations (Hargreaves, 1996).

The lack of surveillance from Britain was coupled with racial stereotypes and attitudes about indigenous people as savages, and these, together saw the violation of values that were otherwise held dearly, back at home. Local indigenous populations were seen as backward and therefore, intrinsically not attuned to issues of nature conservation. Subsequently, they were denied land rights and access to protected areas. Local populations were also portrayed as poachers and generally as threats to wildlife (Harvey, 1999; see also Coetzee, et al, 2001). Given these assumptions, the only appropriate policy to deal with them was therefore, to keep them as far away as

possible from nature reserves. To ensure this, huge and heavily policed fences were installed between local people and the reserves (Harvey, 1999)

4.2 The Philosophical base of the preservationist model of conservation

The preservationist approach to conservation is informed largely by the rationalist (positivist) approach to science. The rationalist approach claimed and emphasised the existence of only one form of reality of which it was the duty of science to discover and disseminate (Chatty and Cochester, 2002; Ghimire and Pimbert, 1997). Once discovered, this reality would enable science to predict and eventually, control nature itself (Babie, *et al*, 2001; Newman, 2000). The rationalist thinking dominated the western intellectual discourse since the period of enlightenment (Newman, 2000). It assumed that knowledge could be compressed into universal laws which, once mastered, would enable man to subdue nature and manipulate it to serve "his" own interests (Chatty and Colchester, 2002).

To advance scientific knowledge and human development in particular, the rationalist philosophy implied that those with knowledge (in this case "the west") should transfer their knowledge to other parts of the world (Babie, *et al*, 2001). In other words, it was the duty and onus of those who have discovered scientific knowledge to disseminate it to the rest of the world. The rationale was that the reason other parts of the world are still lagging behind 'the west" in terms of development was precisely because they haven't yet acquired the "scientific knowledge", that would enable them to subdue and manipulate nature for the service of mankind. To reverse this backlog and save

humanity from "darkness" and "primitivism", scientific knowledge had to be transferred to these "undeveloped" parts of the world.

Applied to conservation, the rationalist philosophy implied that there was only one way of doing nature conservation, and this was the "scientific" way. The latter as pointed out earlier, sees and portrays nature conservation as intrinsically opposed to issues of development (see Chadwick, 1999). What was needed therefore according to the rationalist paradigm was for "everyone" in the world to come to terms with this scientific "truth". The idea was that since the rationalist model had brought about development in the west, it could do the same in other parts of the world as well (Chatty and Colchester, 2002).

The rationalist "one size fits all" approach to reality in general has, however, since been subjected to serious criticism. The main criticism is that the model is ethnocentric and tends to privilege western ways of describing the world over others. It fails to see that reality is a complex phenomenon, and that there is no just one way of looking at it but many (Babie, 2001; Denzi and Lincoln, 2000). Modern science as traditionally understood in the west albeit having dominated development discourse for ages in the past and to a greater extent even today, is just one way of describing the world (Newman, 2000). There are other forms of knowing which are equally legitimate and had over the years provided a useful guide for many societies and communities (Neuman, 2000). The emphasis on only one universal truth is therefore, not only mistaken but also arrogant and had led to many forms of intolerance and suppression of other (human) experiences in many societies. Also, history is full of cases and situations where top-down (rationalist) approaches to development had not

produced desired results in communities and societies they were intending to help, but instead, social and economic instabilities (Motala and Husy, 2001).

With regard to conservation, evidence abounds which shows that indigenous local people are not always detrimental to nature conservation, as the rationalist approach to conservation seems to suggest. Over the years prior to colonialism, indigenous local communities in many parts of the world including Africa have by and large managed to live in correct balance with their ecosystems without posing a serious threat to natural resources (Chatty and Colchester, 2002). They had learnt to adapt production systems and livelihood strategies to local ecological conditions with the ultimate result of environmental sustainability (Hanks, 1998). The Maasai people in Kenya are cited as one of the many examples. It is now wisely accepted that the chasing away of the Maasai community from the Serengeti grasslands in Kenya was based on false assumptions, and that after all, the Maasai were not as detrimental to the environment as it was earlier purported. In fact, the Maasai with their nomadic lifestyle had for years managed to maintain a balance of species within the environment (Adams and McShane, 1992). The land degradation that they were often accused of was actually not their doing, but rather, the result of their dismissal. It was a result of changed land use patterns following the dismissal of the community (Adams and McShane, 1992).

In South Africa, the same pattern and negative attitude towards local communities could be identified. The British colonial administration and later, the apartheid government, had always portrayed indigenous African communities as a danger to the environment. It later emerged though that these accusations were unfounded, and in

fact indigenous communities have for years lived in sustainable ways with their physical environment (Carruthers, 1995; Hanks, 1998). Their lifestyles and general treatment of certain animals and landscapes as sacred (see Posey, 1999) ensured that these resources were protected and not trampled down as it was often assumed. Wildlife in general and animals in particular were also used predominantly for consumption and not for extravagant ends, as it was often the case with the white settlers (adapted in Coetzee, *et al*, 2001). The refusal by the Transvaal and the Free State government to allow African people to own hunting dogs and firearms in the mid- nineteenth century, also limited the capacity of African communities to possibly cause serious danger to wild animals (Carruthers, 1995; Coetzee, 2001). It was in fact, the colonial settlers and the Afrikaners within their sport hunting exploits that posed a threat to wildlife (Carruthers, 1995; Cumming, 1990). Contrary to African communities, colonial hunters and the Afrikaners saw hunting not just a form of securing subsistence, but also, some form of game where one had to beat his opponent (Cumming, 1990).

The accusations and portrayal of African people as "marauders" and dangerous to wildlife, was therefore, a mere smokescreen informed largely by racist attitudes which presented native Africans as savages and intrinsically not attuned to issues of conservation and civilization more generally. It was part of a broader strategy to entrench white social and political domination in South Africa (Carruthers, 1995). With regard to the Kruger National Park Carruthers (1995) points out that the main reason behind the creation of the park was an attempt by white South Africans to forge a unified white identity after the "Anglo-Boer" War of 1899-1902. The British and the Afrikaners wanted to put this history behind them, and open up a "new era" in

South African political landscape. The idea of a national park therefore, provided a basis for this. It would provide the two groups with a platform to forge common white identity in South African outside the realm of "politics" (Carruthers, 1995). A national park would demonstrate to both groups and their posterity that despite all the historical clashes and differences, the two did at least share a common "love" for nature. To entrench this kind of understanding, a mythological image of Kruger (then president of the Transvaal) was created and invoked upon as the main thrust behind the idea of a national park (Cock and Fig, 1999). Kruger was recast as someone who had always sought to advance the welfare of animals, and reverse their possible extinction in the Transvaal and the entire South Africa. He therefore, envisioned a sanctuary where wild animals would be set aside and preserved for posterity (Carruthers, 1995).

However, as pointed out earlier, this portrayal was a pure myth, and Kruger had never championed the course of wildlife, at least to the extent that he was painted out to be. In many circles Kruger had in fact been described as nothing more than a mere "old man who never in his life thought of wild animals except as Biltong" (cited in Carruthers, 1995: 61). Thus, the main reason behind the creation of a national park at the time was basically an attempt to create a common space where white solidarity and identity could be forged. Also, a national park would help to generate income from tourism (Carruthers, 1995)

It is clear from the preceding discussion that indigenous people in South Africa and some parts of Africa were not necessarily a threat to wildlife as their colonial masters had painted them out to be. The fears and concerns that were expressed by colonial

administrators were therefore, unfounded and did not reflect the situation on the on the ground. At best these fears were informed by sheer racial prejudices which painted indigenous communities as inherently wild and dangerous to the natural environment, thereby, justifying all forms of oppressions that were launched against them.

Another difficulty that the preservationist approach to conservation raises relates to the often-unqualified distinction that the approach makes between "nature" and people. The model tends to exclude human beings from its conceptualisation of nature, and paints a picture of nature and pristine environments as existing outside the influence of people (Nabhan, 1991; Pimbert and Pretty, 1995). In reality such environments do not exist (see Abin, 1998). Ecosystems do not exist in isolation and thus, cannot be dissociated from human activity. For centuries "man" has interacted with his environment, and what we see today and often describe, as "pristine and untouched" habitats are in fact the result of this interaction. The idea of pristine is nothing but a myth, and as Pimbert and Pretty (1995: 3) points out, it "exists only in our imagination".

4.3 Concluding Remarks

Overall, this chapter discussed the history of national parks in South Africa, and the relationship that these structures had with surrounding communities. The Chapter argued that South Africa prior to 1994 followed the colonial model of conservation, which made clear-cut boundaries between nature conservation and development. In many developing countries particularly those in Africa, the model resulted in the land dispossession and forceful resettlement of neighbouring communities. The process

was to the most part without adequate compensation for loss and damage of property incurred. The Chapter also pointed out that the preservationist model of conservation started in the United States and Britain in the 19th century, and (the case of Britain) was later transferred to other parts of the world through the process of colonialism.

With regard to South Africa the Chapter indicated that the practice of nature conservation and the creation of national parks were largely informed by racist ideology, which portrayed indigenous African communities as primitive, and intrinsically not inclined to issues of conservation. This kind of thinking justified the subsequent loss of land and various forms of oppression that indigenous people later suffered in the hands of the colonial and apartheid regimes. It was further argued in the Chapter that the idea of the creation of a nature reserve in South Africa (a thing which culminated in the creation of Kruger National Park) despite the claims that it was first borne by Kruger (Boer Commandant and former president of the Transvaal) was in fact a strategy among white South Africans to forge common white identity. This strategy happened at the expense and exclusion of indigenous African people

CHAPTER 5:

CONSERVATION AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The latter half of the 20th century saw a remarkable shift from "authoritarian" approach to conservation to a more socially responsible form of conservation (Coetzee, *et al*, 2001; Cock, 1991). Increasingly conservationists and environmental sociologists became aware that protected areas were not just about the management of biodiversity conservation, but have a social dimension as well (Blaikie, 1995). What was required therefore was an enhanced involvement of communities in the decision-making and management of natural resources. This saw the emergence and new emphasis on concepts such a "social ecology", and "conservation with a human face" (Bell, 1987). All these concepts were pointing out to one thing, that is, conservation would not be achievable unless surrounding communities have a significant role to play in the management of natural resources (Goldman, 2003).

This new approach came to be known as Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). It stressed the need to tap into the collective strength and knowledge of indigenous communities to give them a sense of ownership and thus, ensure their support. The idea was that it is only when surrounding communities earn livelihood and derive long term benefits that the sustainability of protected areas would be ensured (Furze, De Lacy and Birckhead, 1996; Ghimire and Pimbert, 1997).

Protected areas, and national parks in particular, should thus, expand their responsibilities beyond just conservation and attempt to address the socio-economic

needs of neighbouring communities (Chadwick, 1996). Particular focus should be given to communities, which in the past had suffered major injustices and dislocations in terms of land dispossession and forceful removal (Harvey, 1999; Fig and Cock, 1999; Carruthers, 1995). They should seek to create and maximize employment and business opportunities for these communities. Overall, protected areas should begin to act as agents of change and development within their areas and not just be islands of wealth in the sea of poverty as they used to be in the past (Chadwick, 1996).

The aim in this Chapter is to provide an analysis of community based natural resource management (CBNRM) or community based conservation (CBC) initiatives, as they are also popularly known. The Chapter uses the example of the CAMPFIRE initiatives in Zimbabwe to indicate that CBC approaches mark a departure from an authoritarian approach to conservation where indigenous surrounding communities were always left outside processes of decision-making and protected areas management. Zimbabwe is only used here as a reference point, the key focus in this Chapter is South Africa, where the emphasis on "social ecology" or "conservation with a human face" constituted part of the broader socio-political changes that came in 1994. The Chapter uses the Kruger National Park/ Makuleke case study in the Limpopo province as a classical example of these newly envisaged relationships between parks managements and surrounding communities.

The Kruger National Park is not the only park that after 1994 had seriously sought to integrate the interests of park's management and adjacent communities. There are several such parks in South Africa. The Makuleke case is referred to here simply because it has been cited as a model for other national parks and communities to

emulate in South Africa. Finally, the Chapter discusses the concept of community participation, and points out that although community participation had became one of the buzzwords in development discourse lately, the concept is borne with some serious difficulties, which in part explains why it is usually so difficult to implement it in real life situations.

5.1 The CAMPFIRE Initiatives in Zimbabwe

The CAMPFIRE initiatives in Zimbabwe are cited as some of the successful attempts of CBNRM on the sub continent. The initiatives started in the 1980s as attempts to alleviate poverty and empower poor indigenous communities in rural parts of Zimbabwe. As programs for indigenous resources, the initiatives specifically, seek to incorporate and promote the participation of poor communities in the management of protected areas (Hasler, 1996). The main aim is to maximise benefits for these communities through the development of tourism as an alternative land use in these communal lands (Maguranyanga, 1999; Hasler, 1996).

The CAMPFIRE[2] initiatives generally, have been viewed as successful in achieving some of their objectives (IIED, 1994). They have managed to get local people to support natural resource management and to a larger extent change their negative perceptions about protected areas within their area. Nonetheless, the initiatives were not without their own difficulties. Some of these difficulties are generally associated with communities and development in rural areas (Maguranyanga, 1999). These relate to issues of community organization and institutional capacity to identify problems

[2] CAMPFIRE is an acronym for Communal Areas Management Programmes for Indigenous Resources

and channel or distribute resources across the community in its entirety and not just to the benefit of select few. Maguranyanga (1999) argues that CAMPFIRE initiatives have been weak with regard to the question of participation, and understanding poverty from the perspective of intended beneficiaries. He points out that in this regard the initiatives have been top-down, and did not necessarily reflect sentiments of the people on the ground. He however, admits that his study was focused only on one small rural district, Hurungwe Rural District, Ward 15, and therefore may not necessarily reflect the whole picture of the CAMPFIRE as development strategies in rural Zimbabwe (Maguranyanga, 1999).

The focus of this study is on South Africa. The CAMPFIRE example is only referred to, to the extent that it has been widely cited as a model for other rural areas in the developing world seeking to experiment with community based conservation in communal lands (IIED, 1994). It is true that the CAMPFIRE initiatives may be useful and appropriated in other parts of the world. However, it is crucial not to overlook the issue of context and its importance as a guide for effective and meaningful practice of development. For areas with dispersed rural communities and very few communal lands such as South Africa for example, the CAMPFIRE strategies may prove to be inappropriate rural development strategies (Koch in Ghimire and Pimbert, 1997). It is argued that locally suitable strategies are needed to make conservation compatible with issues of social justice in South Africa (Koch, cited in Ghimire and Pimbert, 1997).

5.2 Protected areas in post-apartheid South Africa

South Africa after 1994 retreated from its former colonial authoritarian policy of conservation to a more socially responsible form of conservation (Cock and Fig, 1999). The shift started earlier during the period of transition, and gained momentum after 1994. It was only after the advent of the first democratic government in 1994, that decisive policy measures were taken to reverse the colonial "authoritarian" approach to a form of conservation which recognizes the claims and right of access of communities adjacent to parks to land (Coetzee, et al, 2001). This shift saw the creation of the South African National Park Board in 1996, with the responsibility and duty to make protected areas (national parks) the pride of all people of South Africa and not just the white minority as it used to be in the pats (Harvey, 1999).

Protected areas at large and national parks in particular were now pressurized to move away from the colonial policy of exclusion and domination (Fig and Cock, 1999) and seriously attempt to address pressing socio-economic needs of many rural communities. With endemic poverty in most rural parts of South Africa, and many of the rural populations relying solely on natural resources for their livelihood, it was clear that protected areas could no longer afford to operate "peacefully" and in isolation while people alongside their borders live in conditions of abject poverty. They should therefore, seriously attempt to attend to the plight of the poor. For most poor people in South Africa, hunting and harvesting in protected areas provides the only available source of earning livelihood (Morgan, 2000 cited in Hanks, 1998). These practices provide wood, medicinal plants, and also, wild animals which in many cases are still used as a form of subsistence. Therefore, without necessarily bringing down the fences and allowing local populations to walk inside the parks

unhindered, protected areas should seek out ways in which the needs of these populations could be incorporated into broader interests of conservation. According to this new framework, particular attention should be given to those communities that in the past had been dispossessed of their lands and forcefully removed from national park structures (Fig and Cock, 1999; Harvey, 1999; Fabricius and de Wet, 2002).

5.2.1. Land Restitution

After 1994 the government of South Africa established a Land Claim Commission. The main aim of the Commission was to restore the land, which was lost during the periods of apartheid and colonialism to its rightful owners (Sylvester, 2004; South Africa, 1996**)**. Most of these owners were black Africans, whom the white colonial regime had forcefully taken over their lands, and in 1913 had relegated to about 13 percent of the South Africa's landscape (Walt, et al, 1982; South Africa, 1996). The redistribution of land through the land commission provided a suitable conduit for several communities in the country to claim their lands back. This impacted on national parks as well because some of the dispossessed lands were the ones which were later set aside for the protection and preservation of wildlife (Chatty and Colchester, 2002).

Through the Land Commission a number of land claims were launched, and these included parts of some of the nature reserves (Chatty and Colchester, 2002). One of the well-known cases in South Africa involves the Makuleke community and the Kruger National Park in the former northeastern Transvaal (borders of the present Limpopo and Mpumalanga Province). The case drew widespread attention in the

entire country. The Makukeke claimed the Pafuri area in the northern-most part of the Kruger National Park which they had lost to the then National Parks Board in 1969 when KNP expanded further northward. As it was a pattern at the time, the Makuleke did not get adequate compensation for this loss (De Villers, 1999; Steenkamp, 1999). The community was marginalised and excluded from the management and activities of the park. This sets a huge divide between the community and parks management, and relations between the two had since, been characterised by conflict, with the community wanting to access resources inside the park, and the park management adamant to stick to its authoritarian policy of exclusion and domination (see Cock and Fig, 1999).

With the establishment of the Land Commission after 1994, the Makuleke community saw an opportunity to regain their land. They as a result, launched a claim of the Pafuri region. The claim was launched in 1999, and after a long and tedious process, the community was finally given their land back. This followed an agreement between the Makuleke community and the newly established South African Parks Board that the land would be under the co-management of the two groups. According to this agreement, the Makuleke would retain the existing land use pattern of the Pafuri area (ecotourism), and would not alter it for economically lucrative (but yet environmentally destructive) practices such as mining. The board would, in turn, make sure that the community derives tangible benefits in the form of revenue from ecotourism taking place on their land (Steenkamp, 1999, de Villers, 1999).

The Makuleke case is crucial because it laid a precedent for what the government sees as a perfect possible solution between national park's structures and communities that

have lost their lands during the period of apartheid. The Makuleke settlement had subsequently, been cited widely as a model for other communities to emulate (de Villers, 1999). To many people the case demonstrates that reoccupation of the land by its former owners is not the only possible solution, but that there are other creative ways which if explored could lead to mutual benefit of all parties concerned, communities and park's management. They could lead to a "win-win" solution (see Steenkamp, 1999; de Villers, 1999).

However, it is open to debate whether settlements such as these could possibly be described as "win-win" because eventually, it is the community that suffers in the whole process. The community (in this case the Makuleke) loses the right to use its land as it sees fit, and surrender this to the SANP and park's managements, which then have the final authority to decide how the land is to be utilised. In cases where the SANP thinks that the interests of the community conflict with those of conservation, it is the latter's that would eventually prevail. With regard to the Makuleke the situation seems to have been easier because by the way things have turned out, it appeared as if the community was generally content with this arrangement, and deemed it as the most appropriate solution for the area.

It however, remains to be seen whether this kind of settlement would be sustainable, especially when taking into consideration the fact that people's perceptions and attitudes on issues change with time. Also, the fact that tourism benefits usually take a longer period (about 10-30 years) to bear fruits might prove to be too hard to accept among certain quarters of the of rural communities. This is more so given the fact that tourism development had often been presented as a panacea for all economic ills in

rural areas. The Bakgatla case, discussed in Chapter six reveals that communities can, in fact, turn away and ignore existing agreements if they think that such agreements do not produce expected results.

For now suffice it to indicate that community based approach to conservation as much as it marks a significant shift from authoritarian policy of conservation, does present some serious challenges and difficulties, especially with regard to the issue of participation and how to get (all stakeholders) communities and parks management to live up to their part of the bargain (see Argawal, 1997; Barrow and Murphee, 2001). This includes also the private sector, since it is the private sector with its acclaimed efficiency and resources that is expected, to operate commercial facilities (such as lodges, and camping facilities) within national park areas. Also, despite the rhetoric and claims of community participation, communities often remain peripheral in many so-called community-based conservation approaches (Goldman, 2003). Ways and decisions on how conservation is perceived and managed are still in many instances top-down (Argawal and Ribot, 1999). This is discussed in more details below.

5.3. Community participation framework

The concepts of community participation and participation in general are buzzwords in contemporary development discourse (Turton, 2002). Every organisation involved in development programmes particularly with regard to rural areas purports, in one way or another, to be in support of, and promote community participation. What is often ignored by some of these organisations is the evaluation of the process participation itself, to see how or the extent to which intended beneficiaries are

involved in policy formulation and implementation of development programmes. This omission is often convenient because some development organia tions are not committed to the concept of participation as a matter of principle but rather, use the concept as a bait to attract donors. They view community participation as a laborious process, and thus, delaying to development programmes. Accordingly, ordinary (rural) people are seen as having nothing valuable to contribute to the otherwise intricate processes of development, except to comply, and be content receptors of benefits (see Chambers, 1994).

Most importantly, this lack of evaluation of the concept of community participation emanate primarily from the difficulties borne in the concept of participation itself. The concept participation is highly contested. There is no single, agreed upon understanding of what the concept really mean (Cooke and Kothari, 2003). To some, participation means information circulation. That is, a process whereby beneficiaries are just informed about development projects taking place in their areas. Many still, think of participation as simply drawing on local labour to maintain the services or facilities of projects at hand (Adnan, 1992 cited in Gardner and Lewis, 1996). In both cases, beneficiaries are not involved in the entire process or stages of development. They are excluded from some of the significant stages of project management such as programme conceptualisation and evaluation stages, which have lately been identified as vital in terms of ensuring the sustainability of developments programmes (Bamberger and Cheema, 1990).

Community participation in order to be meaningful, therefore, should be thought of as beyond just the transfer of material benefits to the communities. It should be

understood broadly to provide a space for the poor to get involved in the making of decision affecting their lives (Bamberger and Cheema, 1990; Shaddish et al, 1991; Turton, 2002; Valadesh and Bamberger, 1994). It should offer the poor the opportunity to identify and research priorities and retain initiatives as collaborators in the development process, and not just be passive recipients of benefits. This gives beneficiaries some sense of ownership, and thus, motivates them to support development programmes. Evidence reveals that people do much for themselves when they command resources and have relative influence on development initiatives taking place within their own areas (Brohman, 1996). This involvement includes decisions in the planning and implementation of projects.

The overall aim of community participation is to avoid top-down decision-making process that had dominated development discourse for decades. Its aim is to avoid what Escobar (1995) had once noted that the development paradigm tends to treat ordinary people particularly women as "clients of the development apparatus", rather than active participants (cited in Leroke, 1996: 236). The community participation framework therefore, calls for the empowerment of beneficiaries of development programs, particularly marginalized individuals and communities. It seeks to capacitate people to realise their own potential for cooperation in mutual endeavour, and thus, minimise their dependency upon the state (Midgley, *et al*, 1986). This is so that these beneficiaries could be able to initiate their own projects after development practitioners and donors have withdrawn their support (Mohan, 2002). This form of participation is essential and forms the basis for sustainable development (Vivian, 1995).

It is nonetheless worth pointing out that the concept of community participation is not as simple as it appears out to be. The concept is rather, complex and presents certain difficulties that development practitioners often tend to overlook. The first difficulty relates to the question of implementation. Community participation, albeit desirable in principle, is difficult to implement in reality (Turton, 2002). The problem is that despite the rhetoric, some advocates of community participation are reluctant to fully apply the principle in their activities. They use the rhetoric of participation to pacify and gain the support of development beneficiaries and also, as a bait to attract funding (Midgley, *et al*, 1986).

More importantly, the difficulties usually arise from the fact that in reality, it is impractical to bring all beneficiaries on board to participate in decision-making process. There are several reasons for this. First, beneficiaries may not necessarily be familiar with the technical language that is often used in development discourse. This impedes ordinary people from meaningfully engaging with issues, and where possible to sway decisions and policies to their own advantage (Tosun 2000). The result often is that beneficiaries end up not attending meetings and forums on project implementation, and when they attend, end up just affirming and passively endorsing decisions made from the top. The situation is even worse in rural areas with high levels of illiteracy and apathy. With regard to community based conservation approaches in South Africa, there have been widespread complaints among community representatives that most of the committee meetings with parks management and the private sector are just forums to "rubber-stamp" decisions that are already made from the top. Accordingly, communities are just used as tokens to legitimate "managerial" decisions (Goldman, 2003).

Again, the community participation framework tends to fall in the same trap that it is trying to undermine and depose with the top-down development model. In trying to show the importance of community participation in decision-making, the participatory framework falls into the binary trap of valorising local forms of knowledge as intrinsically superior and impenetrable by outsiders. Perhaps inadvertently, the participatory framework seems to move from the premise of "we know best" to "they know best" (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). The community is portrayed as a locus of pristine and "real" knowledge, and therefore, it is the duty of the development practitioners to simply learn, and contribute nothing to the construction of knowledge in local communities (Cooke and Kothari, 2001).

This binary conceptualization of knowledge that the community participation framework tends to imply is far too simplistic and debilitating. Local knowledge is not necessarily a "given" but borne out of social interaction and existing power relations within communities (Mosse, 1994; Neuman, 2000, Robins, 2003; Collins, 1997; Mayounx, 1995). The "poor" the "rural" and "communities" do not necessarily possess knowledge as a fixed commodity, but constantly produce and shape it through social interaction (Kothari, cited in Cooke and Kothari, 2001).

Communities are also not homogeneous and undifferentiated entities, as the participatory framework seems to suggest, but rather heterogeneous and often highly conflictual (Collins, 1997; Rahnema, 1992; Brown, 1994, cited in Cooke and Kothari, 2001). The portrayal of local rural communities as fragile and always at risk of encroachment from the outside needs also to be treated with caution. Communities do not exist in isolation, but as a web of complex social, political and global networks

(Argawal, 1997). In this setup, it is not always the case that communities are passive victims of external forces. As Collins (1997) argues, powerful groups and individuals within communities often consciously tie up with these broader external forces to entrench their power and influence within their own communities. Communities therefore, are not insulated, self-contained entities but reflect and are embedded within broader socio-economic and political forces (Collins, 1997; Goldman, 2003)

The portrayal of communities as homogeneous systems, always threatened from the outside is not only unsupported in reality, but also, does not help us understand the conflicts and often hostile tensions that often exist within many localities. As Kanneh (1995) points out, the tendency to essentialise when talking about communities and local forms of knowledge is debilitating, as it obliterates the possibility for meaningful dialogue. Social processes including cultures and traditions are usually the result of interaction and dialogue, and what we often hold dearly as distinctly and uniquely "ours", is often the result of this process of interaction (Kanneh, 1995).

The valorization of local communities also tends to inflate the ability of (rural) communities to participate in development projects (Burkey, 1993). It fails to acknowledge some of the serious constraints that affect the level of communities to engage in development discussions (Tosun, 2000). Such constraints include high levels of illiteracy, lack of or poor access to information and often, general apathy, which characterise many rural communities in developing countries (Tosun, 2000). These constraints often result in community members declining from attending meetings on pertinent issues that affect their lives.

The preceding discussion does not, in any sense, call for the abandonment of the concept of community participation. What the discussion is trying to show is that there is a need for critical engagement with the concept, and not just use it loosely and as unproblematic as it is often done in some development endeavours. Overall, the Chapter shows that in approaching entities of local communities, development practitioners should expect to come across differentiated and often conflictual structures without cohesive and collective consciousness. Failure to do this as the community participation model often does could result in development practitioners reinforcing, rather than interrogating power relations that already exist within communities (Burkey, 1993). Communities are not necessarily harmonious social categories, factors such as race, gender and age do impact on the relationship between community members and the way individuals experience "community" life (Burkey, 1993).

Moreover, the discussion points out that "participation" is not as easy as often painted out to be. Various problems and limitations in communities, particularly rural communities, inhibit the level of involvement of these communities in decision-making processes. In South Africa, this is even more evident given the history of neglect, and subsequent high levels of poverty and illiteracy found in rural areas. To think of a "community" therefore, it is useful as Cleaver (2001) advices, not to think of cohesive and conflict-free entities, but instead, a set of relationships and human alliances which are both solidaristic and conflictual (Cleaver, 2001: 45).

CHAPTER 6:

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This Chapter presents the discussion and analysis of the findings of this particular research. The Chapter starts by laying down an outline of the Pilanesberg National Park in terms of its management and relevant structures responsible for the running of the park. The Chapter proceeds to discuss the question of employment creation and the role of PNP in generating and stimulating employment opportunities for communities in the area. The second part of this Chapter deals with the question of community participation. The Chapter looks at the level of involvement of neighbouring communities, most notably the Bakgatla community in the management and decision-making processes of PNP. Particular focus is given to the nature and level of Bakgatla involvement in influencing and shaping policy framework within the PNP. The assumption here is that, it is only when people have a significant contribution in decision-making processes affecting their lives that their needs and concerns are going to be meaningfully attended to.

Pilanesberg National Park is described as one of the best ecotourism destinations in South Africa (Grossman and Koch, 1995). The park is viewed as the first ever in the South Africa to have seriously attempted to integrate conservation and broader issues of development (Harvey, 1999). From its inception in 1979, PNP had identified as one of its primary objectives, the promotion of the welfare of neighbouring communities (PNP Management Series, 2000). The park sees itself as a major player in stimulating

the local economy in the area through generating employment and other economic opportunities for adjacent communities (PNP Management Series, 2000).

The park management concedes that, without the transfer of benefits, and full participation of surrounding communities, PNP, and national parks in Southern Africa at large, cannot realistically be expected to be sustainable particularly against the backdrop of the history of exclusion and domination that many surrounding communities were subjected to during the creation of park structures (PNP Management Series, 2000; NWPTB Annual Report, 2000/2001). Accordingly, for long-term viability of PNP as a protected area, there is a need for neighbouring communities to derive maximum benefits in terms of employment and business opportunities from the operations of the park (PNP Management Series, 2000).

It is against this backdrop (of policy position of the PNP) that this research was undertaken. The research sought to explore whether, what is written on paper, and declared as an official policy, corresponds with what happens in reality. The commitment of PNP to both conservation and community development imperatives is of particular importance, not only to the Pilanesberg region, but also, to the entire North West province at large. North West is described as one of the poorest provinces in South Africa, with the unemployment rates of about 38 percent, slightly higher than the national average. Of these, women are the mostly affected with the estimation of above 50 percent levels of unemployment (State of the Environment Report 2002, North West Province, South Africa).

Although these figures apply for the province in its entirety, and not just the Pilanesberg region, it could be argued that the figures do reflect conditions within the Pilanesberg, and most probably, many other regions in the North West province. During the course of this study, unemployment was cited as a major problem in the area. A report released in 2002 on the state of unemployment in the province attested to this claim. According to the report, unemployment figures in rural areas of the North West province estimate 60 percent (State of the Environment Report, 2002, North West Province, South Africa).

Within the Pilanesberg region, mining of platinum as pointed out in Chapter Two is the major economic sector, and thus, the main source of employment in the area. This is, followed by agriculture and cattle farming. Tourism is identified as having a major growth potential in the area, with PNP alone contributing about R25 million to the local economy (Davies, 1994). To understand and appreciate the social and economic impacts of PNP in the area, it is crucial to first outline the management structure of the park and clarify how the park as a protected area is generally administered.

6.1 The Management structure of PNP

Pilanesberg National Park is managed by the North-West Parks and Tourism Board (NWPTB). The Board was established in terms of the North West Parks and Tourism Board Act of 1997, and is responsible for a number of protected areas including national parks and game reserves in the province (NWPTB, 2000/2003). The Board was created within the context of restructuring of the tourism and conservation functions under the then, Department of Tourism, Environment and Conservation.

The Board was formed out of the amalgamation of a number of functions and staff previously falling under, amongst other structures, the North West Board and the North West Tourism Council (NWPTB, 2000/2001). The NWPTB is a parastatal body which generates its own funding (to run national parks in the province), but still relies on government support for finances.

The NWPTB together with the private sector and local communities, run PNP as a "three way partnership", and together, they are committed to making PNP one of the leading national parks in Southern Africa (NWPTB, 2000/2001, Pilanesberg National Park Management Series, 2000). The feasibility of this grand objective lies in the point made earlier that PNP enjoys the image and status of being seen as one of the few national parks in South Africa to have successfully managed to balance wildlife conservation, and issues of community development (see Grossman and Koch, 1995). Nevertheless, as this study shall indicate later on, this image is often misleading as it creates a glossy picture of the relationship between the park and surrounding communities, especially the Bakgatla ba-ga Kgafela who as pointed out the previous chapters, suffered huge land losses when the park was created in 1979. The reality is that this relationship has been complex, and to the most part characterized by both moments of conflict and cooperation. The conflict had often arisen to the point of threatening the existence of the park itself.

6.2 PNP and employment creation in the area

The question of job creation in the PNP is explored in this study in relation to the area as a whole and not just to the Bakgatla community. This is precisely because PNP as a

wildlife conservation area does not see its mandate and obligation to surrounding communities as pertaining to the Bakgatla community only, but largely, to other communities in the area as well. This is of course, not withstanding the park's management's recognition of the fact that the Bakgatla community, by virtue of having been forcefully removed from their land in 1979 has a special place within the Pilanesberg area, including PNP itself.

In the course of this study, the park's community development coordinator pointed out that whilst the park's official policy is that development should be spread across communities in the area at large, so far there has been a "noticeable bias" towards the Bakgatla people when coming to community projects (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003). The Museum (Mphemotho Museum) in Moruleng was cited as a classic example. The reason for this bias the coordinator explained, is mainly because the Bakgatla, and Moruleng in particular, is in a "tourism hotspot" area, with Bakgatla, and Manyane Gate nearby, serving as major attractions. Thus, the area is already attractive to tourists, and also, easier to market to the outside world (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003)

6.2.1 Lodges as major sources of employment

Lodges (resorts) are the main sources of employment in the PNP. To date, PNP as a protected area has a total of five lodges, namely, Kwa-Maritane, Bakubung, Pilanesberg Centre, Manyane and Bakgatla lodge (Fig 5.1). For an in-depth analysis of the case-study (and factors such as time constraints), this research focused on two lodges only, that is Manyane and Bakgatla lodges. Manyane and Bakgatla are leased

to a company called Golden Leopard. The company runs facilities such as a hotel, restaurant, recreational facilities including swimming pools, and a bird-park amongst others (Johnson Maoka, 07 July 2002).

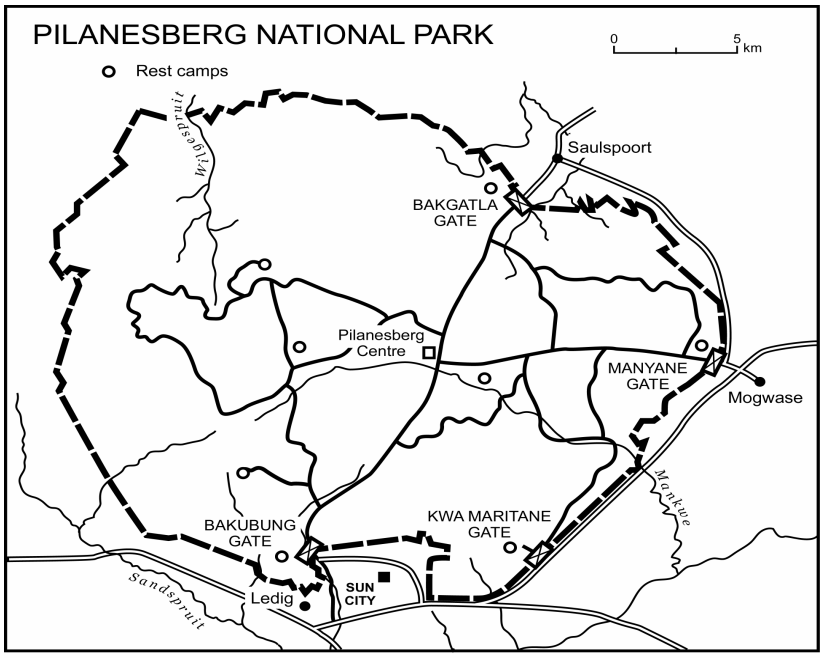


Figure 3.1 Lodges of the Pilanesberg National Park

At the time of this study Manyane and Bakgatla resorts together employed 219 people. Most of these people are employed in service portfolios as waiters and waitresses in the restaurants. Some work in the administration sector as clerks, managers, and assistant managers and many other specialized kind of work. Others perform unskilled duties such as cleaning and maintenance of the lodges. The total of 219 cannot be taken as the exact figure because some of the recruits are only there to provide specific services, and when this is done they are left to go unless in conditions where their services would be required for a long term **(**John Cooper, 12 July, 2002).

Twenty of the employees in the two resorts were employed on a part-time basis. The rest (about 199) were employed on a full-time basis.

The figures remain speculative because they were provided in the course of an interview with the manager of Manyane who was not keen to provide any detailed records to back up his claims. Instead, he used the general manager of both resorts and the food and Beverage manager as his witnesses. The two attested to the claims, and argued that precise figures are difficult to come by because the nature of employment in the resorts is such that "people come and go", and that some of the people that the researcher sees around are "here only for short term in-service training", and would leave as soon as they finish (Wayne Devy, 11 October 2003**).** Asked about hard data on the figures, the General Manager argued that he did not have figures with him, but went on that even if there were figures he would not be in a position to provide such information to the researcher because Manyane as a resort is accountable to government, and could not give their "close files" to everyone (Joe Hof, 11 October 2003).

It was disclosed that about "99 percent" of the people working in Manyane and Bakgatla come from surrounding communities. The researcher was given a leeway to speak to the employees themselves to establish the validity of this claim. The employees (two men and one woman-waiters and a waitress) that the researcher contacted agreed to this, and on the question why the manager was not able to provide statistical information one remarked that, "he was probably afraid that it would be known that they are paying people peanuts".

It is apparent that the majority of people employed in Manyane and Bakgatla resorts are from nearby communities, and that although some of the people provide unskilled labour, a significant number has qualification and special training for their work. Recruitment among surrounding local communities is not just coincidental but embedded within the park's policy that clearly spells out that local people should be given preference with regard to employment opportunities within the PNP, and its lodges. External expertise is only resorted to in cases where there are no matching or equivalent skills locally to fill existing posts. The bias towards local people is not just to ensure the sustainability of PNP as protected area, but also, an attempt to be in line with the policy requirements of SANP that seek to make national parks in South Africa key agents of development in rural areas. In the case of PNP this bias is not something new, but has in fact, "been a policy framework of the park from the time that it was established in 1979" (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003)

The PNP management is however, cautious not to portray the park as a recruitment agency. The park manager put it aptly that:

> PNP is first and foremost a protected area, and it is established with the purpose to conserve endangered wild species and animals, the problem with many of our people is that they see the park as job creation agency. Look, we cannot all work within the park, and people should understand that (Johnson Maoka, 07 July 2002).

These remarks are quite understandable and resonate with the general mandates given to protected areas in South Africa, and across the globe, that they have as their primary function the conservation of endangered flora and fauna. Employment opportunities for local opportunities, albeit not put in so many words (understandably so given the history of national parks in South Africa, Africa and many parts of the

developing world) should come as spin-offs (Johnson Maoka, 07 July 2002). Indeed, there is ample evidence to demonstrate that in cases where the promotion of people's welfare through parks clashes with the issues of conservation, it is usually the former that eventually suffer (see Chatty and Colchester, 2002).

It must be acknowledged that the remarks made by the PNP manager about the expectations that people have on PNP are somewhat exaggerated and tends to be detached from sentiments on the ground. In the interviews with some of the Bakgatla leaders, and also women of Wegeval this researcher noted that the main concern was that the Bakgatla community should derive "tangible benefits" from the park. These tangible benefits seem not to be referring specifically to issues of employment but mainly, the trickling down of revenue to the community. This view is expressed mostly by the community leaders who argue that the 10 percent income that the community receives from the park is not enough.

The women of Welgeval, albeit not overlooking the issue of money, emphasised the issue of access to resources such as burial places inside the park. They also bemoaned that as a community, they are not being granted adequate space to collect firewood as often as they would like to. Moreover, they bemoaned the limits that the park management imposes on the amount of wood that they can gather (Group interview, 27 November 2003).

The apathy and general perceptions that local people usually have about national parks make it less likely that they could see these structures as ultimate sources of employment. These are, to a greater extent, the result of the legacy of apartheid and

colonial exclusionary policies, which made national parks and nature reserves in general exclusive preserves of white people. Although the policies have changed since 1994, and various attempts have been and are still explored to make national parks enjoyable places for all people of South Africa, perceptions still prevail among many African communities that parks are areas for whites (see Cock and Fig, 1999; Harvey, 1999).

Another negative factor is that employment within national parks is generally looked down upon by many black African people. This situation is often a result of lack of awareness of various opportunities that national parks may present to people. Often people tend to think of parks as little more than just a refuge for animals. This viewpoint comes out explicitly in the remarks by the PNP community development coordinator when he said:

> Many of our people think that working within parks is not a noble thing to do. When you tell them that you work within the park, they automatically think that you are running after the elephants and the giraffes. To them we are all chasing after the lions and animals within the park (Ephraim Morei, 20 November, 2003)

What people do not know is that there are many opportunities that the park generates that the community can take advantage of (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003). Asked about what is it that the park is doing to change people's perceptions about employment opportunities inside the park, and get them interested in conservation issues, he mentioned several training courses that the park had initiated over the years. He pointed out that the park had, over the years, taken aspiring young people for some training courses on conservation and tourism-related matters with higher institutions such as Technikon South Africa. About 100 young people already have benefited

from this process (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003). Furthermore, the park runs its own training programmes. In the early 1990s thousands of scholars have attended environmental awareness courses at the Pilanesberg Environmental Centre. In 1992 alone about 11 000 scholars were contacted in this manner by the regional conservation staff of the Parks Board. These programmes saw the emergence of 150 conservation clubs with a membership of 13 000 young people (Grossman and Koch, 1995)

6.2.2 Community-based projects

Employment within lodges and the training of individuals do not directly benefit the community as a whole at least within a short-term period. This being so, development impacts of projects need to be measured on the basis of the impact they have on the community at large, and not just the benefits they accrue for the few. This is not necessarily to overlook the difference and positive impact that development projects could do to the lives of individuals, but rather, to emphasise the importance of making "development" initiatives to have a reach over a broader spectrum of people. The latter, as pointed out earlier, is a useful recipe for sustainable development.

Within the PNP, several projects have been put in place towards the development of surrounding communities. Some of these projects were initiated directly by the park, and others emerged indirectly as spin-offs from the park's activities. Although the focus of this study is particularly on the period since 1994, the park's engagement and responsibility towards local communities, especially the Bakgatla far precedes the year 1994. Several of the community projects discussed in this study, have their

origins in the period long before 1994. Indeed, they were initiated during the period of the erstwhile Bophuthatswana government.

By the time of this study, PNP had already embarked on several community-based projects towards the Bakgatla community. The aim of these projects was to bring about development in communities involved, and more particularly to empower and maximise employment opportunities for concerned communities through spin-offs. Three of these community projects are discussed below. These are the Raserapane project, the Mphebatho museum in Moruleng (also known as Moruleng Heritage Centre), and the Lebatlane Game reserve, located closer to Moruleng. It is emphasised here that these are not the only projects ever taken with, or towards the Bakgatla community. There are many others. The three are chosen for analysis because of their scale and constant reference in reports and various interviews conducted with stakeholders in the area.

6.2.2.1 Mphebatho Museum

The Mphebatho project is focused upon a museum built in Moruleng. The museum is also known as the Moruleng Heritage Centre owing to its physical location in Moruleng. The project was launched in 1999, and involved the renovation of an old school building that was turned into a museum. The aim of the museum, according to the museum curator, is to preserve the cultures and traditions of the Bakgatla-ba-ga Kgafela and expose them to the wider world. The museum aims to demonstrate to tourists into the area how rich and distinct the Bakgatla ways of life are. More importantly, the museum seeks to preserves a “true history” of the area, and shows the

position of the Bakgatla people in the history and development of PNP (Comfort Makakaba, 25 July 2002).

One of the people behind the idea of the museum, an old woman known for her vast knowledge in African indigenous knowledge systems particularly pertaining to the Bakgatla, pointed out during an interview that the museum does not preserve the culture of the Bakgatla people only, but cultures of other Tswana communities in the Pilanesberg region as well. She insisted that she would rather prefer to use the name "heritage centre" in referring to the structure as opposed to a "museum" because in her own opinion, the latter symbolises and implies a "dead place" (storage for old items) that has nothing to do with present reality.

She went on to distinguish (or rather, tried to distinguish) between what she understood as "African" cultures and ways and practices of conservation, and "European" ways. She argued that African ways of conservation are not detached from people's day-to-day way of living. She argued that from an early period a child in an African homestead is taught how to interact with nature in a "mature" and sustainable way to the effect that when grown up, the child knows how to relate with the environment. What happens today, she continued, is a European way of nature conservation that usually presupposes ignorance on the part of indigenous African people about environmental issues.

None the less, satisfaction was expressed with the PNP that the park management was beginning to recognise the value of indigenous knowledge, and lately has engaged in the promotion of conservation clubs and outreach programmes to teach and raise

awareness about the cultural practices of the Bakgatla and communities in the area. Moreover, Conservation clubs and outreach programmes are presently in operation in local schools to "sensitise" the youth about indigenous knowledge (Grace Masuku, 24 November 2003).

The researcher also learnt that negotiations were at an advanced stage with the park's management for a possible creation of a lodge or cultural village inside the park to augment tourists the experiences of "the wild" with some aspects of Bakgatla culture. This however, was denied by the park's community development coordinator who argued that the park's policy does not allow that, and in fact, stipulates that lodges or anything of potential major impact to the environment should be built on the periphery, and not at the centre of the park. This point is also confirmed by the park's management plan (PNP Management Plan, 2000).

Of particular interest for this study is that the museum as a cultural entity does provide several job opportunities for Bakgatla people. At the time of the study a total of six young women were receiving daily training on heritage and (Tswana) cultural issues to prepare them to be future curators and guides within the museum. The overall aim of this training, according to their mentor (the woman referred to earlier), is not just to provide them with immediate jobs, but more generally, to provide them with skills which, in future, will prove to be useful in their careers (Grace Masuku, 24 November, 2003)

The museum is seen as one of PNP's most successful projects ever taken towards the support of the Bakgatla community. The park raised a sum of about R980-000 with

the Department of Environment and Tourism (DEAT) Poverty Relief Fund towards the renovation of the museum. According to the PNP community relations' coordinator, the park further raised funding for the installation of signage posts alongside major roads passing through Saulspoort, and thus, further exposed the area to outside markets. All these endeavours, it was argued, are often met with "lack of appreciation" from the side of the community (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003).

6.2.2.2 Raserapane project

Another major project initiated for the Bakgatla community is Raserapane Recreation Centre. The latter was started in 1995 as an alternative recreation site for the community. This follows the park's appropriation of the Bakgatla Gate (locally known as "Dikgogometso" meaning Gulf or mountainous area). Bakgatla Gate used to be a major recreation centre for the Bakgatla and other communities in the area. Usually on weekends and public holidays, local communities used to hold festivities and other "cultural" events in the area. The park built the chalets and other facilities next to the area and later leased these to the Golden Leopard Company, which also runs commercial operations at Manyane Gate. The Company later complained to the park's management about the community's day visits to the area. The complaint was that these visits cause havoc and disturb the peace and tranquillity of tourists visiting the area. The park consulted with the tribal authority and subsequently it was agreed that an alternative area be found where local people would continue with their activities without necessarily interfering with the business operations of the Golden Leopard Company. As a result of this agreement, Raserapane structure was

established (Comfort Makakaba, 25 July 2002**;** Minutes of meeting of Community Development Task-team held on the 16th of October 1997, Tlhabane).

Raserapane structure is located in Moruleng about two kilometres from the tribal authority headquarters. The project was officially launched in December 1996, and handed over to the Bakgatla community. At the time of the research the project was incomplete. It had just gone through the first of the three stages, and it was up to the community to complete the last two stages (Minutes of Community Development Task-team meeting held on Thursday, the 16th of October 1997). Unfortunately, the community could not afford to complete the structure, and by the time of this study the structure was derelict with long grasses and shrubs growing all over the area. In addition, windows were broken, and it was clear that the facility had not been used for quite a long period. The structure was abandoned and dilapidated, and the community development facilitator (also curator of Mphebatho museum) informed the researcher that the ruins were basically all that the park management had offered to do. It was further pointed out that this was despite the fact that the community did not have any money to complete the structure. Moreover, it was also indicated that the reason why the structure was incomplete was that the community was not prepared to fund an initiative that it was not part of in the first place. The decision for Raserapane was entered into with the chief and some "gullible" members of the tribal council without full approval of the rest of the Bakgatla community (Comfort Makakaba, 25 July 2002). Furthermore it was argued that the Bakgatla people were still feeling very angry about the park's expropriation of "Dikgogometso", and were expressing this anger by refusing to pay for the completion of the project.

It is clear therefore, that while the Mphebatho Museum project was relatively successful, by comparison, Raserapane was of limited success, at least at the time this research was conducted. Having said that, the establishment of the structure itself (the first stage) generated some employment opportunities for certain people in the area. The whole process of construction saw the creation of about 250 new jobs for the community (Minutes of Community Development Task-team meeting held on Thursday, the 16th of October 1997). These included bush-clearing, fencing of the site, and the laying down of building facilities (Minutes of Community Development Task-team meeting held on Thursday, the 16th of October, 1997). Although these were mostly temporary and unskilled work opportunities, they did for a while provide some means of earning livelihood for people who, for the most part, find themselves living under the scourge of poverty (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003).

The above remarks have been echoed in many circles by those who promote tourism development, arguing that the problem with critics of tourism as a development strategy is that they tend to view and portray tourism in a narrow sense as a substitute, rather than a complement to other economic enterprises in rural areas. This, they argue, is a narrow conceptualisation of tourism because in countries where tourism development, and particularly ecotourism, the latter had been promoted as a synergy, and not a replacement of already existing economic activities (Goodwin, 2000; Grossman and Koch, 2001; Helmsing, 2001) Although this aspect cannot be described as an exclusive attribute of tourism development, it is generally agreed that tourism, given its labour intensive nature, is, more than any other sector better able to draw labour from a broader spectrum of society, ranging from the highly skilled to the

unskilled. In this way, it is better suited to promote development and enhance the livelihoods of ordinary people (Rogerson, 2002; South Africa, 1996).

6.2.2.3 Lebatlane Game Farm

The third major project looked at in this research is the Lebatlane Game farm. Lebatlane is a small community owned game reserve of about 3 850 hectares. The reserve is located about 30 kilometres north of the Pilanesberg National Park. What happened is that when PNP was created in 1979, the Bakgatla people were left with several farms that were not incorporated into the park. These farms were used communally for grazing purposes but later provided fertile hunting grounds for game hunters. Indeed, the farms provided a suitable alternative for the otherwise expensive trophy hunting of the PNP (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003).

The Bakgatla people, realizing the economic potential of the area soon fenced it and set it aside for hunting purposes. PNP management donated certain game to augment the hunting capacity of the area. Accordingly tourists would officially visit the area for hunting on a certain fee. The money would then go straight into the revenue base of the community. In addition, a camping site was also installed, and there were even plans to establish a (Batswana) cultural village within the reserve. Donors were also sought, and the Independent Development Trust granted a total of R100 000 towards the development of the reserve (CDO Annual report, 1996). Although the project was completed, it later came to suffer from poor maintenance, and shortage of skilled administrative staff (CDO Annual Report, 1996).

The floods that hit Southern Africa in the years 2000/2001 also had a negative impact on the reserve. Fences were swept away, and at the time of the research, the area was almost desolate with cattle freely moving in and out. The Lebatlane Game Reserve held a major economic potential for the Bakgatla community precisely because it drew its labour force directly from the community (Comfort Makakaba, 25 September 2002). The problem of shortage of skilled personnel to run the reserve effectively was a major blow to the initiative. It highlighted the point often made concerning tourism and development projects in general, that in most cases, they fail to produce desired results due to a lack of adequate skills and capacities within local areas, particularly rural areas. What usually happens is that many projects start off on a promising note only to decline at a later stage (Tosun, 2000).

6.3 Community participation

The question of community participation cannot realistically be divorced from the question of employment creation in discussing the issue of tourism development (Tosun, 2000). It is through people's involvement in decision-making processes of projects within their own areas that their chances of securing employment are enhanced. Through participation, community members are either employed directly to manage certain stages of a project or secure employment indirectly through spin-off effects. Direct employment also brings about empowerment by providing people with skills that may prove useful for them in the future (Bamberger and Cheema, 1990).

Nevertheless, modes or levels of community participation in development projects and decision-making in general differ from one project to the another depending

largely on the willingness of development agencies and practitioners to allow communities to be involved, and also the skills and general ability of communities to participate (Tosun, 2000). Accordingly, there are several different types of community participation (see Table 5.1.)

Table 1 A Typology of Participation

Typology	Components of each type
Passive participation	People participate by being told what is going to happen or what has already happened. It is a unilateral announcement by project management; people's responses are not taken into account.
Participation in information giving	People participate by answering questions posed by extractive researchers. People do not have the opportunity to influence proceedings
Participation by consultation	People participate by being consulted, and external agents listen to their views. Professionals are under no obligation to take on board peoples views.
Participation for material benefits	People participate by providing resources, for example labour, in return for food, cash or other material incentives. It is very common to see this called participation, yet people have no stake in prolonging activities when incentives end
Functional participation	People participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives. Such involvement tends to be after major decisions have been made. These institutions tend to be dependent on external initiators and facilitators.
Interactive participation	People participate in joint analysis, which leads to action plans. It tends to involve interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives. These groups take control over local decisions, and so people have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.
Self-mobilization	People participate by taking initiatives independent of external institutions to change systems.

Adapted from Pretty *et al.* 1994

An ideal type of community participation in development process is one that results in the general empowerment of community members (Chambers, 1994; Bamberger and Cheema, 1990). It gets people involved in development projects from the stage of

planning to the actual stage of project implementation. It is interactive, and encourages active involvement of beneficiaries in decisions making which affect their lives (Bamberger and Cheema, 1990; Turton, 2002). In other words, it does not just make communities "clients" of development but active participants, and indeed, stakeholders in development projects in their area (adapted from Escobar, 1995). This form of participation is, in many parts of the developing world, utopian in character given many structural and other constraints that hinder the full involvement of beneficiaries in their own development (Tosun, 2000). This being the case, in many instances participation is being defined narrowly to imply the mere transfer of material benefits to communities. This kind of participation tends to be short-lived because usually when development projects come to an end, communities are left desolate and often, in worse-off state than they actually were before the project started (Shaddish *et al*, 1991).

6.3.1 Bakgatla participation in the management of PNP

The participation of the Bakgatla community in the management and decision-making processes of the PNP cannot simply be presented in a linear fashion as some commentators have often implied it. From its formative years, the park has not been consistent in its dealings with the community. This is notwithstanding that the park has been described often as the best ecotourism practice in South Africa. On some occasions, the park management seemed committed to or, at least moving in the direction of involving the Bakgatla in the running of the park, while at other times this objective seemed far removed from the general concerns of the park. This section of

the study looks at these shifting trends within the relationship of the Bakgatla people and PNP.

6.3.1.1 PNP, the formative years: Years of prospects

When a decision was made to turn some parts of the Pilanesberg area into a protected area in 1979, meetings were held with some members of local communities particularly those that would directly be affected by the initiative, to make them aware of these intentions. Meetings were held with the leaders (tribal authority) of the Bakgatla community to inform them it had been found that the area was best suited for nature conservation and ecotourism, in particular. Although the community was not totally happy about this decision noting the implications thereof, emotions were cooled down with the promise that those members of the Bakgatla that suffer damage of property and the loss of land would be compensated accordingly. The community felt, at the time, that whilst the process of relocation was inhuman and brutal, there was still some hope that the park management and the Bophuthatswana government at large would still save the situation, and give community members what was "due" to them. To appease the Bakgatla people, the Bophuthatswana government pledged to grant the community the following:

- To allow relocated Bakgatla people free access to family graves inside the park
- The allocation of two nearby farms for community grazing and farming
- The right of the Bakgatla to enter the park and collect medicinal plants, thatching and fire wood

- The reimbursement for costs incurred while dismantling existing homes during relocation
- The appointment of Bakgatla's chief, Tidimane Pilane, to the new Park's Board of Trustees (see Magome and Collinson, 1998)

6.3.1.2 The breaking up of relations

Unfortunately for the Bakgatla, the park's management did not fulfil what had been promised to the community. The management of the park became too preoccupied with the infrastructural development of PNP in a quest to make PNP one of the best and most successful wildlife protection sites in the sub-continent. Not surprisingly, the community was angered by this kind of treatment. It felt that it had been "taken for granted". Most importantly, the Bakgatla were angered by the fact that reimbursement for damages incurred during the relocation process turned out to be less than what had been expected. Some people claim to have been given as little as R150 for homes they estimate to have cost them more than a thousand rand. Moreover, they also complained about the conditions of the alternative land that they were given, claiming that it was not as fertile as their original land. In their former land, one woman remarked,

> We had everything, we could sow vegetables, the land was just fertile, we had fresh water from the river. It was not like where we are today. Here we cannot plant vegetables because there is no water, our taps are forever closed, there are no jobs and when we try to make a living by selling liquor, the police arrest us. Really this government has forgotten us (Focus group discussions, 27 November 2003)

Also, the plots of land that they were given in their new "homes" were not as large as the ones they had left behind. They were rather, smaller, and again, not suitable for

large-scale crop cultivation. It also emerged that an additional land (farm locally known as "Baga-biekie"[3] an indigenisation of an Afrikaans word "Wag biekie" meaning wait a moment) that they were given for crop farming was desolate and difficult to cultivate, particularly for poor people without sophisticated machinery to till the land. Accordingly, nothing substantial happens in that land. The people of Welgeval just know *de facto* that they have a farm allocated for crop farming, but in practice, there is nothing that they could do with it (Focus group interviews, 27 November, 2003).

The difficult conditions that the people of Welgeval currently find themselves in create nostalgia for the past. It is often played out in simplistic binaries of "the past" being painted as representing everything that is good, and "the present" representing everything that is bad. All socio economic problems that the community encounters according to this conceptualization seem to sprout directly from the fact that the community has been disconnected from the land of their ancestors- a source of life.

Notwithstanding the possibility of this being true, there is a tendency among people to paint a glossy picture about their past once they find themselves in a new and often hostile environment. Indeed, Gilroy (1992) captures this vividly through the notions of "roots" and "routes", arguing that with "routes", people tend to become more passionate with their "roots" and often cast the latter in a more glossy and romantic picture. It is argued that this is, to a large extent a recast and a creative process because what people usually say about their "roots" is not necessarily factored into

[3] This is probably a subtle way of pointing out that the farm was understood by the community as a mere token, and strategy on the part of the Bop government to silence or shift the attention of the community away from their original lands

reality (Gilroy, 1992). Nonetheless, the Bakgatla people felt cheated by the PNP, and decided to launch a court case against the park demanding their land back (Munnik, 1991, cited in Magome and Collinson, 1998)). The implication was that PNP should be "deproclaimed" as a protected area, and the land be given back to their rightful owners. The news came as a shock to the park management and the Bophuthatswana government in particular, because until then, the government had never thought of relations with the Bakgatla as having deteriorated to this point (Magome and Collinson, 1998).

6.3.1.3 The Formation of a Community Development Organisation

To salvage this deteriorating situation, the park management and the government reopened contacts with the Bakgatla, and recommitted themselves to promises they made earlier. The Bakgatla chief was subsequently included in the Park's Board of Trustees as initially promised, and a community development organisation (CDO) was established in 1992 to oversee the community's relations with the park (Harvey, 1999; Magome and Collison, 1998). The CDO was a legally recognised non-profit structure made up of members of the Bakgatla community (Magome and Collinson, 1998).

The organization served as a conduit between the community and the park's management. One of its major functions was to transmit benefits accruing from the park to the community. These included the annual ten percent gate-takings that according to the "new commitment," were to be granted to the community. The CDO

had to make sure that this money was utilized effectively for the benefit of the Bakgatla community as a whole (Magome and Collison, 1998).

Overall, the CDO managed to ameliorate relations between the Bakgatla and the PNP management (Davies, 1993 cited in Collinson and Magome, 1998). Also, it was able to implement several projects that PNP initiated towards the community. Some of these included the Lebatlane Game Farm and Raserapane project that were discussed earlier. The CDO facilitated the building of schools, crèches and more generally, the improvement of road infrastructure in the area (Comfort Makakaba, 25 September 2002).

6.3.1.4 The CDO and Political changes of 1994

Unfortunately, the CDO as an initiative did not exist long enough for one to make a fair assessment of its performance. The organisation was soon overtaken by political events that swept South Africa in 1994. To some sections of the community, the CDO was seen as nothing more than a brainchild of the tribal authority and the Bophuthatswana government. With the post 1994 political dispensation, therefore, the organization was called upon to dissolve (CBO annual report, 1996). It was seen as redundant and duplicating the role of newly formed local Reconstruction and Development (RDP) structures. The latter emerged immediately after transition to democracy in 1994, and were entrusted with the duties and responsibilities of development throughout South Africa (Bond and Khosa, 1999).

The dissolution of the CDO did not augur well with some members of the Bakgatla community especially those who were once members of the organization. Many blamed the new African National Congress (ANC) government for "messing up" with everything that is associated or was initiated by the erstwhile Bophuthatswana government. One woman argued that:

> The problem with our government is that it seeks to destroy everything that was introduced by Bophuthatswana government. The Mangope government had its problems, but the truth is, it is not everything that he (Mangope) did was bad (Focus group discussion, 27 November 2003).

Similar remarks were made by the PNP Community Relations Coordinator concerning the lack of conservation awareness in the area. It was argued that the previous Bophuthatswana government used to subsidise local schools for children to visit PNP. This subsidization raised interest and awareness about conservation issues among local people. But with the advent of the new government, this was no longer the case. This shift is attributed to changes of roles and functions of many parks boards across South Africa. Unlike before, parks boards are now more focused on what happens inside the park, and not outside (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003). The latter, in the case of PNP, is now the sole responsibility of the provincial Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Environment (DACE). DACE is responsible for environmental awareness campaigns in the province. On paper DACE is supposed to bring members of local communities particularly school children inside the park, but before it could do this, it has to first ask permission from the park's management bodies. It is apparent that DACE finds it increasingly difficult to execute its responsibilities mainly due to long bureaucratic procedures that it has to follow before it could for instance, bring children into the park. The problems of

marketing and poor staffing are also cited as the main limiting factors for the department

The demise of the CDO is also attributed to a "group of demagogues" who claimed to represent the Bakgatla people, and sought to convince people that the CDO was no longer necessary. The organisation was subsequently dissolved (officially) on the 26th of September 1996 (CDO annual report, 1997**).** With the CDO no longer in existence, a vacuum was left between the community and the park management. This lacuna was filled by the tribal authority, which continues to be responsible to implement projects initiated by the park. At the time of the research, the park's community relation's coordinator shouldered these responsibilities. He goes around, visiting various communities in the area to identify problems and listen to their grievances concerning PNP (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003).

The main grievance so far comes from the Bakgatla people, and concerns the issue of land. The Bakgatla have instituted a land claim to the provincial land claims office claiming a huge chunk of the park (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003). The case seemed to have been laid to rest in the early 1990s, but had since re-surfaced once again. According to the park's community development officer, the issue is in the hands of the community lawyers. He refused to divulge further information on the case claiming that it is at the moment still *sub-judice*, and that we should wait for the final verdict from parties involved.

However, it is apparent that the Bakgatla community had claimed about 27 percent of the park. What makes the situation even more serious this time around is that the land

that the Bakgatla has claimed is right in the middle of the park, a thing which effectively could threaten the very existence of the park itself (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003). The main reason for this new claim it emerged was precisely because the Bakgatla people are not satisfied with the 10 percent gate takings that they receive annually from the park. The community wanted more money. The park management conceded that the Bakgatla's demand for their land although a bit unrealistic, is understandable because, after-all, the community has rightful ownership of the land, and in fact, is in hold of title deeds to prove this (Ephraim Morei, 20 November, 2003). The community's land claim presents the parks board with two options, that is, either to increase revenue to the community, or to just encircle the land and hand it over to the community (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003).

The last option is however, ruled out as unsustainable. Instead, it was argued that the park and the Bakgatla people should sit down and come up with a solution that would benefit the two parties. It was further pointed out that in a worse case scenario where the park could just decide to encircle the land and give it back to the claimants, the land would not be developed. Moreover, the park management is of the view that the community, even if it could be given back the land, would not be able to maintain its productivity in the manner that the parks management had done so far. The current "noise" from some sectors of the community for the return of the land would naturally disappear if the park could decide once and for all to encircle the land and give it back to the claimants. The reason for this "noise" is because the claimants are in actual fact interested in the money and not the land per se (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003).

The giving back of the land to the community presents yet another difficulty. This relates to the potential tension this may spark among the Bakgatla people themselves. The land that the community had claimed is not necessarily a collectively owned land, but also, land owned by individual members of the community some of who do not even know the physical boundaries of the land that they are claiming (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003). What they just know is that they or their parents used to graze their livestock in some parts of the area of the present PNP. This vagueness opens up room for abuse, because in an unlikely scenario whereby people will be given their land back, some members of the community might eventually end up with larger plots of land than others (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003). This situation could possibly serve a source of conflict in the future, which the park, and the Bakgatla people themselves are definitely not prepared to see happen. Moreover, the disagreements and divisions among the community itself as to what option they want to take regarding their land, further complicate the matter. Nevertheless, the parks community relations coordinator sees this uncertain situation as an opportunity for both parties to come up with a workable solution. It would enable the Bakgatla to see how untenable and damaging the option of taking back their land could be, and thus possibly persuade them to enter into a "reasonable" arrangement with the PNP's board. Such an arrangement would include the community agreeing to an increase of money from the gate-takings, while PNP management continue developing the conservation and tourism potential of the area.

The increase of monetary benefits from gate-takings seems to be the option that both parties would eventually settle for. During interviews with some of the Bakgatla community members, including focus groups, it emerged that the community does

not necessarily want to go back to the lost land. Rather, what it wants is "proper treatment" from the park's management. One of the leaders remarked:

> There is no doubt that the park's board has developed the land into a viable commercial product. We as the Bakgatla are fully aware of this, what we want is that the park recognizes that we are the owners of the land and should trickle tangible benefits to the community" (Comfort Makakaba, 25 July 2002).

On the question of the 10 percent gate-takings that the community receive from the park management, his response was poignant. He retorted, "What will you do with 10 percent? The park is making a lot of money from our land but they want to give us crumbs" **(**Comfort Makakaba, 25 July 2002). Nonetheless, it was pointed out that money is not the only thing that the Bakgatla expects from PNP, instead, the community wants to have a "sense of ownership" over the park itself. The Bakgatla want to have a feeling that PNP as a protected area belongs to the community and that their rights of land ownership are protected and respected. Sentiments were also expressed that the park should "do more" towards the development of the community particularly in terms of creating employment opportunities. It was claimed that current opportunities are not necessarily directed towards the Bakgatla, and other Tswana communities in the area. The people who work in the Bakgatla Gate, it was claimed, are not the Bakgatla, but rather, "outsiders" who cannot even express themselves in any of the local Tswana languages. It was claimed that some of them comes from as far as Kwa-Zulu-Natal, thus, implying that they are Zulus. The respondent continued that the Bakgatla as a community are not necessarily opposed to the employment of "outsiders" into the PNP because "they are also our brothers", but rather, what the community wants is proper treatment from the park management (Comfort Makakaba, 25 July 2002; Koos Motshegoa, 25 September 2002).

It emerged from this research that issues such as the building of schools, the improvement of roads networks and job creation particularly for young people were the priorities in terms of the community's expectations of the park. This point was further supported by the participants in focus group discussions who claimed that they do not necessarily expect the park to return the land to the Bakgatla community, but rather, would prefer to see the park playing a significant role in improving the conditions of roads, and reducing high level of unemployment in the Wegeval area.

The focus groups participants did not apportion the entire blame for lack of development in Welgeval and neighbouring villages to the PNP management, but the tribal authority as well. It emerged from these group discussions that development projects among the Bakgatla tend to be in favour of the Moruleng village at the expense of other villages. So far major development projects such as the museum and the improvement of road infrastructure seem to be taking place at Moruleng. Although the Welgeval focus group participants blamed this skewed development to their own *Kgosana* (sub-chief or headman) whom they accused of being "too submissive" to the orders from the main chief and council at Moruleng, it seems that Moruleng is receiving the special attention from the tribal council simply because the area is the headquarters of the community. The chieftaincy and all main administrative functions of the community take place at Moruleng.

The expressions of women of Wegeval point out to arguments made in Chapter Five that communities are not homogeneous, but rather, heterogeneous. Also, they demonstrate that sources of conflict and domination are not always exogenous to local communities but could be located right within communities themselves. Indeed,

they point out to what Chambers (1993) calls “spatial bias” in his analysis of rural development strategies in many developing world countries. Chambers (1993) argues that development in rural areas usually takes place at “the “front stage” as opposed to the “back stage”. He argues that it is usually areas next to the main roads and other sites of immediate visibility that gets priority in terms of renovation and general improvement. Rear areas or what he calls “the back stage” is often neglected. This, he argues, is a strategy to give visitors an impression that the entire area enjoys the same level of development. Poverty is usually relegated to the “back stage” where only few researches and external visitors are prepared to go. He therefore, urges and challenges researchers to become more daring and visit the “back stage” as well because this is usually where the real conditions of the poor are reflected (Chambers, 1993**).**

6.3.1.5 Evaluation of community participation in the PNP

It follows from the preceding discussion that the question of community participation in the management and decision-making structures of PNP is much more complex than has often been considered. This complexity relates in part to the definitional difficulties of the concept “participation” itself, and also, to the different understandings that individuals and organisations usually attach to the concept. Bakgatla participation in decision making and management of the PNP in no way befits an ideal model of participation (discussed in Chapter Four) whereby a significant number of community members and various interest groups are brought to the fold to have an influence on policy decisions affecting their lives. The involvement of beneficiaries in development projects is imperative not just for ethical considerations but also for reasons of sustainability. It is widely acknowledge d that

the involvement of beneficiaries in decision-making does not necessarily have to resemble the ideal classical model (where everyone is involved) *par excellence*, but rather, should emphasise the involvement of beneficiaries through the representation of various competing interests within the community (see Shaddish *et al*, 1991). In this sense, participation should not just mean the involvement of special privileged elite groups in policy making, but should extend and include other interests groups as well (Bamberger and Cheema, 1990; Valadesh and Bamberger, 1994).

Within the PNP, the park management seems to be satisfied with bringing the Bakgatla on board only when it is convenient to do so. In this way, the Bakgatla participation in the management and decision making structures of the park becomes more of a damage control strategy than, strict adherence to principle. To the park management, community participation tends to mean nothing more than mere transfer of material benefits to the community.

Even at the time of conceptualization, consultation with the community was conducted only with leaders in the tribal authority (Magome and Collinson, 1998). Other interest groups were not consulted. This situation is understandable given the manner in which traditional authorities generally operate. Also, this was a period in South Africa, where the values of consultation and participation in any form of governance were non-existent or at least not adhered to (Comfort Makakaba, 25 July 2002). In this sense the Bakgatla should not be viewed as an isolated case, but rather, as a microcosm of broader political milieu in South Africa at the time. By the standards of the time however, PNP performed relatively well, because it had shown

early, a willingness to incorporate issues of conservation with community development (Grossman and Koch, 2001).

The creation of institutional mechanisms such as the CDO later on, signifies a commitment on the part of the park's management to the promotion of the welfare of the Bakgatla community. Although the creation of the organisation came directly as a result of increased pressure from the community, it warrants credit because at the time, there were no strong institutional frameworks upon which the community could launch their case, as it is perhaps the case today (post 1994). Thus, for the park's management to respond in the positive manner that it did demonstrates a different set of attitude and approach to conservation within PNP, as compared to what was happening in other parts of South Africa

The current arrangement of a single individual (community relations coordinator) consulting with more than 28 villages to listen to grievances and complaints about PNP is not ideal in terms of enhancing participation. By any stretch of the imagination, this form of arrangement is highly impractical, and explains why some members of the community claim that they have never before met with, or even seen, the community relations' coordinator when visiting their area (Focus group discussion, 24 November 2004). The most likely situation is that the coordinator just meets with leaders at the tribal council, which as alluded to earlier, is not likely to be productive given the size and the number of other emerging political voices within the community. An enhanced participation of the community in the management of the park therefore, would require the recognition and acknowledgement of these "other" voices as representing some interest within the community. To this effect, one

might envision a re-emergence of a formal structure similar to the erstwhile CDO, but with a broader composition of members to capture and reflect the wider views of the community. Although such structure would, not be a panacea and ensure the participation of all members of the Bakgatla community, it would make possible for other groups to influence policy and decisions on issues affecting their lives. An ideal form of participation is difficult to implement, and often, is limited by factors such as high-level of illiteracy, and general lack of interest in issues relating to policy-making that characterize not just the Bakgatla but many rural communities in South Africa

Lack of interest is often exacerbated by ordinary people's failure to grasp the technical languages used in debates and discussion about development. This situation becomes even worse in communities which, in the past, were made to believe that conservation is inherently antithetical to their general being as people.

6.4 The summing up of the discussion

Overall, the findings of this study reveal that the question of employment generation and community participation are integral to PNP as a wildlife protection area at least at policy level. Nevertheless, it is clear that there is a disjuncture between the rhetoric of policy and what actually happens on the ground. The chapter showed that PNP does contribute to employment creation in the area, and that lodges play an important role in this regard. Nonetheless, the contribution of PNP to creation of employment in the area should not be exaggerated. By focusing on the Manyane, and Bakgatla lodges, the chapter has indeed shown that PNP employs only a small group of people in the entire area, of such high levels of unemployment.

With regard to the question of participation it has been argued that community participation in the PNP area does not come close to the ideal situation. Participation in most part reflects an old way of thinking about the concept, with only material benefits accruing to local communities. The chapter argues that this form of participation within PNP should not be divorced from broader politics and approach to conservation in South Africa at the time. This being so, it is stressed that the level of community participation in the management of the park can be enhanced with various interest groups in the community, (and not just the tribal authority) being brought on board in terms of decision making. Nevertheless, this change would be difficult given the different understandings of participation and ways of organizing the society that usually prevail between traditional structures of authority, and other interest groups in society, most notably political organizations and civil society.

CHAPTER 7:

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim in this research was to explore the social and economic impacts of nature-based tourism in the Pilanesberg National Park on surrounding communities, with particular reference to the Bakgatla community at Saulspoort. The study began by mapping out the history of conservation in South Africa during the colonial and apartheid period. It was argued that historically, conservation practice in the country was divorced from broader issues of human development, and focused exclusively on wildlife preservation.

This practice was not uniquely confined to South Africa, but had been a general pattern in other parts of the developing world as well, particularly in the continent of Africa. The separation of wildlife protection from issues of development and people's welfare draws from western practices and philosophy that portray "nature" conservation and human beings as incompatible, and therefore, could not be pursued at the same time. The philosophy started in the United States and Britain during the 19th century, and diffused to other parts of the world through the process of colonialism.

During the 20th century, developed countries (particularly the United States and Britain) became increasingly concerned about the possible loss of "natural ecosystems". The fear was that with growing civilisation and expansion of human settlement, "pristine" "natural" environments would eventually be lost to humanity,

and thus, leaving nothing in behind for future generations to see how far "we" have come as human species. Against this backdrop, vast areas of land were set aside to protect and preserve what was left of the so-called unspoilt natural habitats. National parks were created with an emphasis on preserving wildlife from human encroachment. This development, it was argued, was for the general good of human beings themselves. Nevertheless, often this preoccupation with wildlife protection occurred at the expense of people, with many communities adjacent to parks experiencing the humiliation of land dispossession and forced resettlement.

The research had shown that whilst this preservationist approach to conservation began in the west, it reached its maximum impact in the developing world. With regard to Britain, the research showed that there was in fact a double standard with regard to the way in which this approach was implemented. At home, Britain made sure that the rights of land ownership of surrounding communities especially farmers in rural areas were recognised and protected. It was in the colonies that neighbouring communities were brutally dispossessed of their lands and forced to resettle in otherwise agriculturally unproductive lands alongside national parks. Such indigenous communities were portrayed as a "danger" to wildlife, and the only way to deal with them was to keep them as far away as possible from the protected areas. To ensure this, huge fences often with heavy police patrol were installed as a boundary between people and parks (Harvey, 1994; Carruthers, 1995).

In South Africa, the Kruger National Park is an archetype of this practice of conservation. During the creation of the park in 1996, and its subsequent expansion, neighbouring communities were driven out of their land, and were later even

prevented from utilising natural resources inside the park. In this way, these communities were cut from their core source of livelihood. The situation reached a climax in 1969, with the removal of the remaining Makuleke community from the Pafuri region in the northeastern part of the park. Their removal, like many other removals at the time, was without compensation. Many rural communities across South Africa were "rooted out" of their lands of origin to far-off desolate places where they had to start life all over again.

The research indicated that with the transition to democracy in 1994, the new government put huge pressure on national parks to start integrating issues of community development into their operations. National parks were subsequently required to start operating as agents of development and change in rural areas. Particular bias was to be given to local communities, which, in the past, had suffered severe forms of injustice, such as loss of land and forceful removal. To facilitate this process, a new national parks board was established (South African National Parks board) with the prime responsibility of ensuring that national parks begin to envision the "new" South African society, with issues of social justice and development becoming of major significance to their day-to-day operations.

This shift from an "authoritarian" approach to conservation, to a more open, "people-centred" approach, is not uniquely confined to South Africa, but rather, reflects broader trends and practices of conservation in many parts of the world at the time. In Southern Africa, the CAMPFIRE initiatives in Zimbabwe represent some of the pioneer initiatives in this regard. The initiatives are the most notable in the entire

continent of Africa to have seriously sought and attempted to involve local rural communities in the management of protected areas.

The research focused on the case study of the PNP (Chapter 6). The research confirmed the findings of other analysts (see Harvey, 1999; Magome and Collinson, 1998; Grossman and Koch, 1995) that, PNP is the first wildlife protection area in South Africa to have (from its inception), showed a great eagerness to integrate conservation, with issues of social development.

Nonetheless, the research argued that the achievements of PNP on the issues should not be exaggerated. Often, the relationship of PNP to neighbouring communities is portrayed as harmonious and devoid of serious conflicts and difficulties that are usually associated with other protected areas (such as the Kruger National Park). This tendency is exacerbated by the fact that PNP is a pioneer in linking conservation issues and development. It was shown however, that the situation is a bit complex, and from the beginning, the relationship of PNP with neighbouring Bakgatla community has, been marked by both conflict and cooperation.

During the early developments of the park, (the period since 1979) the relationship between the community and the park management was relatively cordial, with the Bakgatla people consulted and being informed about the broader vision and activities of the park. At this stage, the Bakgatla community felt to some degree, part of the park structures despite having gone through the harsh experiences of forceful removal and resettlement earlier on. The community had some hope that, all was not lost, and

that they at least be incorporated into the new land use practice within the Pilanesberg area.

Later however, in the early 1980s, relations became sour, with the park and the Bophuthatswana government overlooking the promises that had been made to the community. This neglect threatened the existence of the park because the Bakgatla were then angry and adamant that they want PNP to be "deproclaimed" as a protected area. The situation improved some times later with the creation of a CDO whose main task was to serve as a communication link between the park and the community. The mediation role of the CDO was maintained until the latter was dissolved in 1996, following the claims that the activities of the organisation were "clashing" with local RDP structures (CDO annual report, 1996).

All these findings support the general argument made in this research that the relationship of PNP and surrounding communities (and by implication the commitment of the park to promoting the welfare of neighbouring communities), is a complicated one, and not as positive or "romantic" as often portrayed. It emerged during the course of this research (2003) that the relationship was once again deteriorating, and that the Bakgatla community have launched another land claim, claiming about 27 percent of the PNP (Ephraim Morei, 20 November 2003).

The research focused particularly on the question of job creation and community participation. With regard to the former, it was argued that PNP does make a contribution in generating employment opportunities for nearby communities. Some local people, particularly those with relevant skills, are employed in lodges. Others

get an opportunity through occasional community-based projects that the park often engages in. This work is usually temporary and therefore, its contribution to the general well being of the people is minor. This is more so, considering the fact that the level of unemployment and poverty in the area is proportionally high. As the parks tourism manager remarked in an interview during this research, the contribution of PNP to employment creation in the area is "just a drop in an ocean" (Gus Van Dyk, 01 October 2002).

In terms of the question of community participation, the research observed that the level of community involvement in the management of the park is not ideal, and does not come closer to an ideal practice of participation where a significant number of beneficiaries have an influence on decision-making. For the most part, participation in the area resembles an old understanding of "participation" that reduces community involvement in (development projects) to mere transfer of benefits to communities, without any substantial or meaningful change to the lives of community members themselves. This situation exists notwithstanding the innovation of conservation-training programmes, which aim to expose local youth to issues of conservation and tourism in general. Nevertheless, there is a need for acknowledging that models, particularly of abstract processes, such as "community participation", are often difficult to implement in reality (Tosun, 2000).

The tribal authority remains a sole conduit of communication between the park management and the Bakgatla community. This position is understandable within traditional communities such as the Bakgatla. The problem with this is that the tribal authority, by its very nature and ways of operation, does not represent and capture the

interests of diverse and numerous groups within the community. Political organisations and organs of civil society are often left out of the decision-making structures. Therefore, for meaningful community participation in the management of protected areas, structures or institutions should be put in place that represent and reflect different voices and interest groups in the community.

In the case of the Bakgatla this research recommends the establishment of an organisation similar in form to the now defunct CDO, to work closely with the tribal authority to facilitate relations and communication between the park management and the community. Unlike the CDO, the new organisation should be composed of different groupings in the community and not just members of the tribal council or those closely connected to it. Such an organisation should try and capture the current (post 1994) political mood in South Africa where the role of civil society, and free political activity are not just desirable but also, constitutional imperatives.

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Devy Wayne: Food and Beverage manager, Manyane lodge

Focus Group interviews with women of Welgeval village

Hof, Joe: Manyane Camp Manager

Makakaba, Comfort: Curator Muruleng Heritage Centre (Mphebatho Museum)

Maoka, Johnson: Chief Warden of Pilanesberg National Park

Masuku, Grace: Retired principal and organiser of community projects/ former member of CDO

Morei, Ephraim: Pilanesberg Community Relations Coordinator

Motaung Steven: Headman in Welgeval village

Motshegoa, Koos: Bakgatla Community Development Officer

Stemmet, Sam: Manager Manyane Lodge

Van Dyk, Gus: Pilanesberg National Park Tourism Manager